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Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

How would you describe your level of understanding of federalization as it applies to labor in the CNMI?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

17th Year

McDonald's Saipan today marks a significant milestone: its 17th anniversary.

LOCAL...Page 14

Do Your Part

Washing clothes is more than just a chore; it also takes quite a toll on the environment.

ENVIRONMENT...Page 18

Price of Beauty

Singer Jessica Simpson examines people's obsession with looking good.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

GAO cites weak controls in OIA-funded CNMI projects

» CHC dialysis tops list of problematic projects

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The Government Accountability Office said yesterday that nearly 40 percent of grant projects in the CNMI and other U.S. insular areas funded through the U.S. Interior Department's Office of Insular Affairs have internal control weaknesses that increase their susceptibility to mismanagement, fraud, waste, and abuse.

The Commonwealth Health Center's dialysis project on Saipan ranked first among 24 OIA-funded projects with the highest

See GAO on Page 4

CUC pushing rate hike for water, wastewater in May

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. wants its water and wastewater rates increased and has submitted a petition with the Public Utilities Commission that it be allowed to implement a staggered rate hike starting May this year.

See CUC on Page 4

PROPOSED WATER AND WASTE WATER RATES:

	Residential (10,000 gal)	Commercial (25,000 gal)	Government (25,000 gal)
Current	$60.35	$165.12	$2,107.50
May 2010	$67.19	$186.35	$2,482.50
Oct 2010	$77.45	$218.18	$3,057.50
Oct 2011	$88.53	$252.57	$3,657.50

TINIAN STOPOVER

Two U.S. military pilots flank, from left, Rear Adm. Douglass T. Biesel, Don Farrell, Tinian Mayor Francisco Dela Cruz, Sen. Jude Hofschneider, Rear Adm. Paul J. Bushong, and Joint Region Marianas special political adviser Roy Tsutsui soon after a visit to the Tinian nuclear bomb pits. Biesel, the outgoing commander of the Joint Region Marianas U.S. Naval Forces, accompanied Bushong, the incoming commander, during a courtesy call on several CNMI officials yesterday. The two military officials also met with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and the MIMC Policy Committee during a visit to the Office of the Governor yesterday. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New bill eyes 70 hours every govt pay period

» Measure not made public yet

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

House Ways and Means Committee chair Rep. Ramon Basa (Cov-Saipan) has pre-filed a bill that seeks to slash government work hours to 70 per pay period, a measure that House Minority Leader Rep. Diego T. Benavente

See NEW BILL on Page 4

Ex-lawmaker, 2 others nabbed for allegedly growing marijuana

J. Castro

P. Castro

V. Castro

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Authorities arrested former lawmaker Pedro P. Castro and a father and son during separate raids on Saipan in the last two days for allegedly cultivating a total of 186 marijuana plants.

In addition to marijuana, former Rep. Pedro Castro was also allegedly found in possession of a .410 shotgun.

See NABBED on Page 4

February visitor arrivals up 6 percent. PAGE 2

Senators want costly driver's education class suspended. **PAGE 7**

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Local

February visitor arrivals up 6 percent

February 2010 visitor arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands were up 6 percent compared to February 2009, largely due to strong showings from Korea and China.

According to the Marianas Visitors Authority, arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 37,850 visitors last month compared to 35,594 in February 2009.

Arrivals from the primary market of Korea registered 9,603 visitors in February, a 16-percent increase over February 2009, when the weak Korean economy limited outbound travel to all destinations. With Korea's economy now in strong recovery mode, arrivals from Korea have posted double-digit growth for the past three consecutive months. There were also more air seats available from Korea to the Northern Marianas in February 2010 compared to February 2009.

The secondary market of China posted a substantial 168 percent increase to 6,286 visitors in February. During the month, the Northern Marianas welcomed a total of seven charter flights from Beijing due to high travel demand during the Chinese Lunar New Year holiday. In addition, regular charter flights from Shanghai and Guanzhou were in operation this February. Last year the Lunar New Year fell in January and charter flights from only Shanghai were in operation.

Arrivals from Japan were down 13 percent compared to February 2009 with 19,271 visitors, a decline largely influenced by fewer available air seats from Kansai. Arrivals from Kansai region posted a 51-percent decline, as Delta Airline's pullout from the market resulted in a 19-percent decline in available air seats. However, Asiana Airlines continues to operate between Kansai and Saipan. Arrivals from Nagoya were nearly unchanged at 1 percent, while arrival from Tokyo posted a 3-percent increase. Meanwhile, the Northern Marianas is bracing itself for the temporary suspension of Delta Airlines flights between Nagoya and Saipan in April, a move announced by the airline due to low forward bookings and Delta's need for the aircraft elsewhere.

Russian arrivals were 64 percent lower than they were last year at 181 visitors, while arrivals were up from the United States (up 62 percent to 997), due in part to one visiting military vessel with a crew of 320. Arrivals from Other Areas were also up 26 percent to 226. ***(MVA)***

Fund administrator Aguon cleared of contempt

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman ruled yesterday that NMI Retirement Fund administrator Mark A. Aguon is not in contempt of court in connection with a lawsuit filed by a retiree for the non-payment of his interim disability benefits.

After listening to oral arguments and reviewing the briefs on the issue, Wiseman said he finds that Aguon did not act in bad faith by failing to comply with the court's order in Jesus A. Arriola's lawsuit.

The judge ordered Aguon to pay Arriola pursuant to the Administrative Hearing Officer order of Nov. 1, 2008, up and until June 19, 2009.

In December 2008, Arriola filed a petition to compel Aguon to immediately pay him his disability retirement benefits.

On Jan. 26, 2009, Wiseman ordered the Fund to pay Arriola but Arriola alleged that Aguon only partially complied with the court order. Wiseman gave Aguon 10 days to immediately pay Arriola his interim disability benefits. He also stated in that order that it is his tentative decision that Aguon is in contempt of court.

On March 4, Aguon filed a motion, saying he should not be held in contempt because, with the Fund board reversing the AHO order, there was no order for him to comply with.

The administrator also claimed that the AHO order conditioned the payment obligation upon receipt of an employer certification which was never received, and so his obligation to pay never rose.

In his order yesterday granting Aguon's motion, Wiseman said he finds that although the administrator claimed that he was under no obligation to make payments to petitioner based on the Fund board's reversal of the AHO order, he did continue to make disability payments beginning January 2009.

In addition, Wiseman noted, Aguon continued to make payments up and until the present time.

"This shows that [Aguon] did attempt to comply with what he believed to be the court's order beginning in January 2009," he said.

Therefore, the judge added, the respondent was not willfully attempting to violate the court's order especially since he was privy to the board's reversal of the AHO's order.

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King: Board not dragging its feet in Fernandez's case

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Board of Regents chair Janet Han King defended the board yesterday against claims that it is dragging its feet in the case of suspended Northern Marianas College president Dr. Carmen Fernandez, saying the board needs to get all the facts straight before it makes a decision on the matter.

"As chairwoman of the Board of Regents I would like to address concerns raised by the media and public in regards to the matters before the board. There appears to be the perception that the board is dragging its feet in this matter. Nothing can be further from the truth. What is before the board is a personnel matter of which an employee is entitled to privacy in the matter until a final resolution is reached," King said in an e-mail to *Saipan Tribune*.

King pointed out that any perceived delay is the result of some requirements the board needs to meet for a fair investigation against Fernandez.

"What takes time is the requirements of a good and thorough investigation, which is needed in this case since this not just a simple matter of the president but potential wrongful acts by her which affects other people in the community as well the college and its academic integrity," she said, pointing out that one lead can lead to another lead until firm proof is found or a claim is found to be unfounded.

» 'Thorough investigation aims to protect all interests'

King said the board intends and strives to protect all interests, even if it calls for a longer period of time to conduct a thorough investigation.

Fernandez was suspended on Jan. 12, 2010, pending two investigations against her involving the alleged changing of students' grades and personnel matter at the college.

King conceded these two investigations by the board and the Office of Attorney General may overlap but are conducted with two different objectives.

"Currently those investigations are covered by attorney client privilege. The OAG has presented a lengthy report, which the board began to review but due to its length and detail, coupled with the facts that some board members had prior obligations, forced the matter to be continued to a later date when all members can again meet and finish the review and also review the reports from the Board legal counsel, which is expected to be just as lengthy and in more detail and containing legal analysis," King said.

She emphasized it is the board's position that a thorough review of all reports and legal analysis is needed before board members can fulfill their duty.

"The board members are here as a service to the community but take their role very seriously and have no greater priority than the interest of the students and the college in this matter," she said, adding that the board would like the community to know that each individual board member has not made up their mind on the allegations and have promised themselves not to do so until everything has been reviewed and a discussion can be had on the specific instances.

King

Further, King said Fernandez's employment is controlled by an employment contract that guarantees her certain rights and due process.

"As a party to this matter the board intends to protect her rights and will afford her the due process required by law and contract if that is the direction the board decides to go. As such, this matter will take time to finalize even after the board decides what course of action to take," she said.

The public may feel that this is a waste of government money, King said, but in the long run it may limit any government liability.

"The board respects the community interest to know what is going on but will remain on course amidst criticism and accusation of dragging its feet or political interference, of which the board strongly states there has been none. The Board has the welfare of students, the college, the Commonwealth and Dr. Fernandez in their hands [and it] will act in an unbiased dispassionate manner when they have full knowledge of the case overall," King said.

She added that the board asks the public's indulgence to allow them the time to properly undertake "this very complicated task."

Some senators had questioned NMC officials Tuesday why the board has been taking so long to decide the fate of Fernandez.

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NEW BILL

From Page 1

(R-Saipan) described as worse than the proposal defeated last week.

Benavente said Basa and his committee may also be in violation of the Open Government Act for not releasing a copy of House Bill 17-45, even after the House agenda for Friday's session already lists it.

"The leadership is once again trying to pass an austerity bill. I am not asking people to oppose it but they should be given a chance to review the bill so they could air their views and comments on it during the session during the public comment," said Benavente, who is opposed to bills seeking to cut government salaries.

He said the committee "seems to circumvent the provisions of the Open Government Act."

The Legislative Bureau said it only numbered Basa's bill, but it does not have a copy of it.

Basa separately said yesterday that he pre-filed House Bill 17-45 but said he was advised that he has the prerogative not to release a copy of the bill until during the House session set for Friday at 2pm.

The Open Government Act, which recently reapplied to the CNMI Legislature, requires a 72-hour public notice of sessions and agenda, among other things, prior to the session.

"I am hoping that this new bill will be more favorable than the previous bill," Basa said in a phone interview.

Basa's H.B. 17-45 reduces work hours by having government offices start operations at 8:30am, Monday to Friday. Regular government work hours are from 7:30am to 4:30pm.

Basa's committee earlier wanted to reduce work hours from 80 to by 72, or one hour less from Monday to Thursday and a full eight hours on Fridays. However, Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos had said the Fitial administration wants the one-hour cut from Monday to Friday.

Basa said the committee may still make some changes to his new bill.

The Fitial administration pushed for the work hour cut after projected revenue for Fiscal Year 2010 was revised to $137 million.

The original estimated resource for FY 2010 was $150.500 million, with $148,083,551 to be spent for government operations.

Due to a projected decline in revenue, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial adjusted this amount to $137,350,000, representing a 7.25 percent reduction that he said "must be absorbed by the budget authority remaining for the fiscal year."

CUC

From Page 1

CUC executive director Tony Muña told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that the petition, which asks for a three-step rate increase, is set for deliberation and decision this month.

Once approved, the first rate hike will take effect in May this year, followed by another adjustment in October 2010. The third adjustment is set for October next year.

For residential ratepayers who consume 10,000 gallons of water, CUC wants an initial 11-percent increase in both water and wastewater rates.

Residential customers using 10,000 gallons of water currently pay a flat rate of $60.35 for both water and wastewater charges. As proposed by CUC, this will increase to $67.19 starting May. The next increase in October will boost this to $77.45—a 15 percent increase. A year later, the rate will go up to $88.53—a 14-percent increase.

Commercial customers who consume 25,000 gallons of water will be slapped with an initial 13-percent rate hike. The existing rate of $165.12 will jump to $186.35 in May, while a 17-percent adjustment will be made in October, boosting the amount to $218.18. Come October 2011, the same commercial customer will be charged $252.57, a 16-percent increase.

For government ratepayers, or agencies consuming 25,000 gallons of water, they will be paying at 18 percent above their current rate. From the existing rate of $2,107.50, the figure will rise to $2,482.50 in May; to $3,057.50 in October this year; to $3,657.50 in October 2011, which translates to a 20-percent increase.

Muña said the proposed rate increase is due to the significant amount of water and wastewater charges that are not being collected by CUC.

"There is about $5.5 million that potentially may need to be collected from water and wastewater customers because of the electric usage of pumps and other wastewater equipment out there that require electric power," he said.

He stressed that the increase is essential toward helping the agency achieve its mission of full cost recovery.

Saipan Tribune learned that CUC presented two scenarios to the commission: the full-cost recovery scenario, which would have meant even higher rate increases, and the CUC proposal.

Muña emphasized that CUC recommended the latter proposal so as not to unduly burden the island's consumers.

Under the full cost recovery scenario, the proposed rates would have resulted in up to 64 percent increase for some customers.

CUC has 3,500 water customers on island.

Muña said the island's power rate will remain unchanged for the moment.

"As far as electrical usage is concern, we will keep the status quo for now," he said.

GAO

From Page 1

prevalence of internal control weaknesses.

Of the 24 projects, 13 are in the CNMI, including the dialysis center.

These weaknesses in the dialysis center project include frequently changing priorities, lack of local operations and/or maintenance funding, limited local capacity, and contractor issues.

OIA provided a capital improvement grant for the CHC dialysis clinic in 1997. It was scheduled to be built by August 2004, but was not completed until December 2007. As of September 2009, the dialysis center still lacked Medicare and Medicaid certification and was not yet in use.

These were among key issues in the GAO's 70-page report yesterday to the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources titled, "U.S. Insular Areas: Opportunities Exist to Improve Interior's Grant Oversight and Reduce the Potential for Mismanagement."

GAO, the investigative arm of the U.S. Congress, also said that several cases of misconduct and mismanagement involving insular areas have raised additional concern about the capacity of OIA to monitor grants and detect cases of mismanagement.

Two examples are the extensive delays in the construction of CHC's dialysis facility in the CNMI that was provided funds in 1997 but as of August 2009 had yet to be certified and used, and the 2007 indictment of two ranking American Samoa officials charged with fraud, bribery, and obstruction pertaining to federal grants.

CHC's dialysis center started as a $5 million project that ballooned to $17.6 million three years ago, to $22 million last year.

Besides the CHC dialysis center, other CNMI projects with a high percentage of internal control weaknesses are the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. power plant rehabilitation on Saipan, the Rota Health Center, the Tinian landfill, and the Tinian wastewater system.

For example, in 2005, the CNMI government shifted OIA funds from a project originally funded in 2004 updating a Tinian school building to a project developing a wastewater system. In 2007, funds were again shifted from this incomplete wastewater project to a project developing a Tinian airport instrument landing system, which has since been suspended.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that the CIP Office was notified that the report was completed but the Fitial administration has yet to receive/review the report.

Fitial administration concerns

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, in a letter to GAO Director Anu K. Mittal after receiving a draft copy of the report, said the CNMI finds the grant management report "well written, balanced in its analysis, and makes positive suggestions for improving grant implementation."

Inos, however, gave specific comments on the GAO report's analysis and conclusion.

Among other things, Inos said since the percentage of internal control weaknesses is so high, this may be an indicator that the reporting requirements are inappropriate.

He said the CNMI agrees with GAO that the changing of priorities and ineffective management has affected performance, but these results were symptomatic of the previous grant management structure, which was recently revised.

Inos told GAO that the CNMI has concerns in regard to the five-year period for evaluating agency effectiveness. He said significant changes in agency effectiveness can be implemented within one fiscal year and these changes should be recognized in any evaluation structure.

"Establishment of a five-year period for evaluation minimizes any changes and is biased toward government that has well-developed financial systems," Inos told Mittal in a Feb. 23, 2010 letter, attached to the final GAO report.

Improvements

Interior, through, OIA, provides some $400 million annually in financial assistance to insular areas, roughly $70 million of which is awarded annually as grant funds to the CNMI, American Samoa, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

These grant funds are for capital improvement projects such as roads, schools, and medical facilities.

But GAO noted that over the past five years, OIA has taken steps to improve project implementation and management.

Most notably, OIA established incentives for financial management improvements and project completion by tying a portion of each insular area's annual allocation to the insular governments' efforts in these areas—such as their efforts to submit financial and status reports on time.

In addition, OIA established expiration dates for grants to encourage expeditious use of the funds.

"Despite these and other efforts, some insular areas are still not completing their projects in a timely and effective manner, and OIA faces key obstacles in compelling them to do so," GAO said.

Anthony M. Babauta, Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs, said he's pleased with GAO's conclusion that OIA has made important strides in implementing grant reforms.

Babauta, who was in the CNMI in January to visit the CHC dialysis center and other OIA-funded project sites, among other things, said OIA concurs with GAO's recommendations.

"OIA will continue to improve its processes and also work with other federal agencies and insular grantees to help ensure that effective internal controls are in place," Babauta told Mittal.

GAO said the internal control weaknesses, including insufficient reporting and record-keeping discrepancies, can be categorized into three types of activities that may increase the possibility of mismanagement: grant recipient activities, joint activity between grant recipients and OIA, and OIA's grant management activities.

It said weaknesses associated with grant recipient activities were the most common issues GAO found, encompassing 62 percent of the weaknesses exhibited by OIA grant projects.

The joint activity—redirection of grant funds, a practice by which OIA allows insular areas to move grant funds between projects—accounts for 24 percent of the weakness present in OIA grant projects.

While project redirection can be a helpful tool, it can contribute to project mismanagement if not used appropriately, said GAO.

Weaknesses associated with OIA grant management activities, including discrepancies in grant management data, account for 14 percent of the weaknesses in grant projects.

Insular areas confront a number of challenges in implementing OIA grants, which can be categorized into project planning challenges such as frequently changing local priorities; project management challenges such as limited local capacity for project implementation; and external risk factors, including the declining economic conditions of American Samoa and the CNMI.

"While some of these challenges are beyond the insular areas' control, others result from decisions made by the insular area governments. These challenges can result in implementation delays for grant projects," GAO said.

NABBED

From Page 1

Juan B. Castro, 55, and his son, Vicente C. Castro, 36, were also arrested, according to Department of Public Safety spokesman Eric F. David.

David said the 63-year-old Pedro Castro was arrested for illegal possession of controlled substance, illegal possession of a firearm, trafficking of a controlled substance, and manufacturing of a controlled substance.

David said that members of the Department of Public Safety and CNMI Customs Joint Drug Enforcement Task Force, together with Criminal Investigation Bureau detectives, raided Pedro Castro's farm in Marpi yesterday at 5:30am.

Authorities had reportedly obtained information that marijuana plants were being grown at the farm.

David said lawmen found 41 marijuana plants on the farm, ranging from seedlings to full-grown plants five feet in height.

David said Pedro Castro admitted to police that he and his nephew owned the marijuana plants.

Pedro Castro also allegedly provided information that he found the .410 shotgun while farming.

Authorities searched the house of the former congressman in San Antonio and allegedly found 21 bags of packed marijuana, along with empty ziplock baggies.

In the second case, Juan and Vicente Castro were taken to the Superior Court yesterday for a bail hearing on charges of illegal possession of a controlled substance and trafficking of a controlled substance.

Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona imposed a $6,000 cash bail each for Juan and Vicente Castro. She appointed a lawyer for the two and set the preliminary hearing on March 25 at 9am.

David said that authorities raided the residence of Juan Castro in As Matuis on Tuesday at 1:30pm after getting information about a marijuana plantation in the area.

David said authorities seized 145 marijuana plants ranging from two to three feet tall.

He said police questioned Juan and Vicente Castro, who allegedly admitted owning the plantation.

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Saipan Tribune

US govt insists on forensic chemists in men's drug trial

The U.S. government is insisting on being allowed to present the expert testimony of two Drug Enforcement Administration forensic chemists in the case against two suspected methamphetamine or "ice" traffickers.

Assistant U.S. Attorney James Benedetto notified the U.S. District Court for the NMI of their intent to have DEA forensic chemists Daniel M. Roesch and Helene Jensen testify at the trial of Roque S. Norita and Julita A. Sablan.

Benedetto said that Roesch and Jensen will testify to the identification, weight and purity of the "ice" on evidence.

Benedetto filed the amended notice after Norita, through counsel Bruce Berline, urged the court to sanction the U.S. government for allegedly failing to produce an adequate written summary of its expert witnesses.

Berline, said that, on Nov. 20, 2009, the U.S. government provided Norita with the government's notice of intent to present expert testimony. Berline said the notice had no written summary explaining the need for the expert witness' opinions. He argued that this unjustified failure is sanctionable and asked the court to prevent these drug experts from testifying.

Norita faces three drug trafficking charges and four gun possession charges.

The 41-year-old Norita pleaded not guilty to all charges. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

2 sobriety checkpoints tomorrow

The Department of Public Safety will be conducting sobriety checkpoints on Friday, March 19, on Saipan.

The first setup will be along 2W Puerto Rico by the Army Reserve Center, on the southbound outer lane, from 4:30pm to 5:15pm.

A second setup, also from 4:30pm to 5:15pm, will be along Route 33 in front Susupe Ada's Gym on the southbound outer lane.

Each checkpoint will last at least 75 minutes —one hour, 15 minutes—at each location.

This activity is part of the department's efforts to deter, detect and apprehend impaired motorists on highways and to ensure that all vehicle occupants are protected.

Checkpoints will be terminated if it starts to rain.

Police officers will also be conducting highway criminal interdictions, saturation patrol, and laser activities.

For more information, contact Sgt. Sylvan Rangamar 664-9084 or 664-9085. ***(DPS)***

This is an all day filled with wonder.
Please come and join us as we celebrate our 17th anniversary this Saturday, March 20, 2010.
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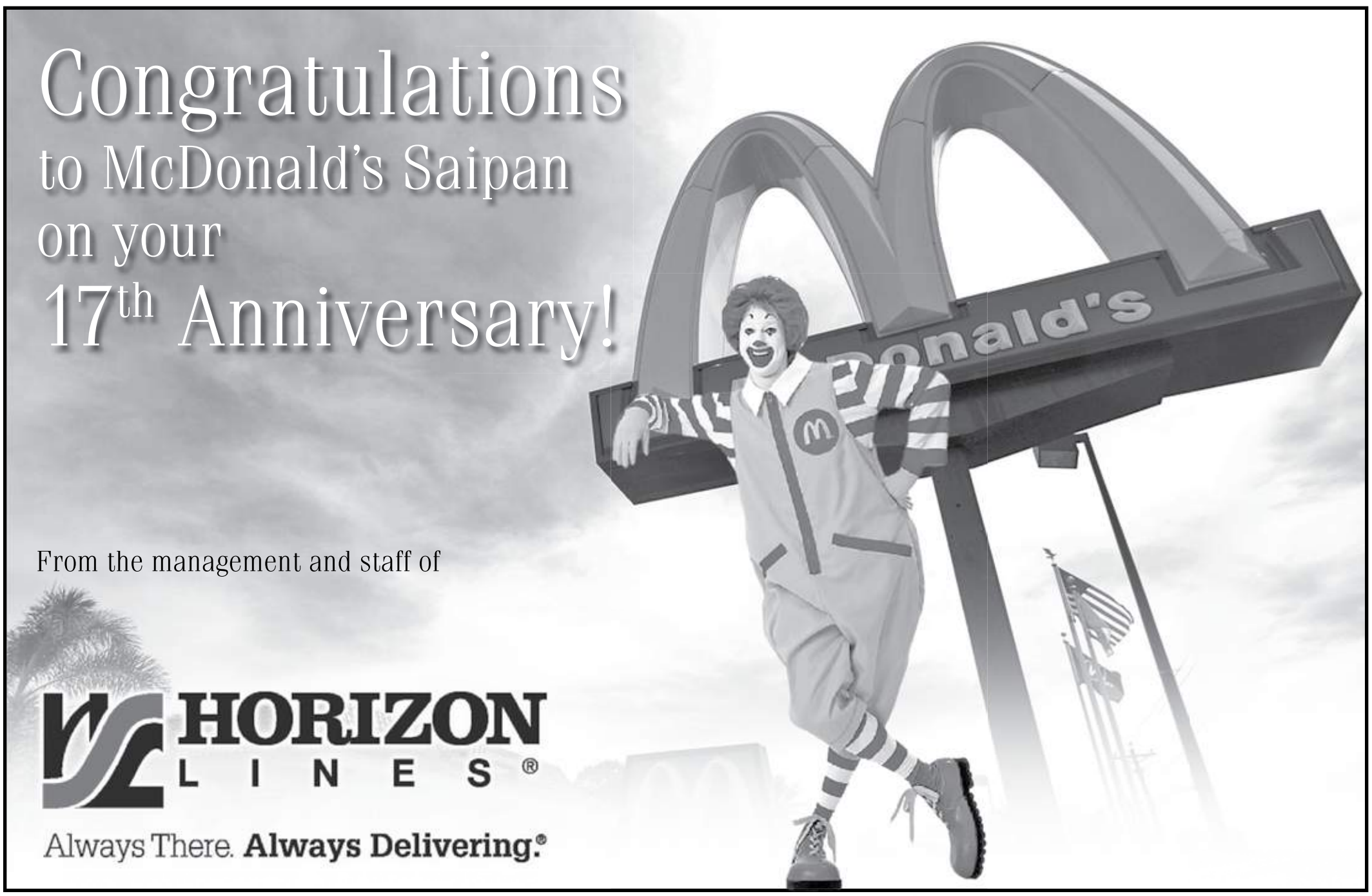


Cop in extortion case gets more prep time for trial

The federal court granted yesterday the request of a police officer being charged with extortion to provide him more time to prepare for trial.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David A. Wiseman said the ends of justice would be served by giving Christopher Leon Guerrero more time to review the evidence in preparation for his trial.

Wiseman said this will also give Leon Guerrero more time to pursue plea negotiations.

The judge set the new trial date for July 19, 2010 at 9am.

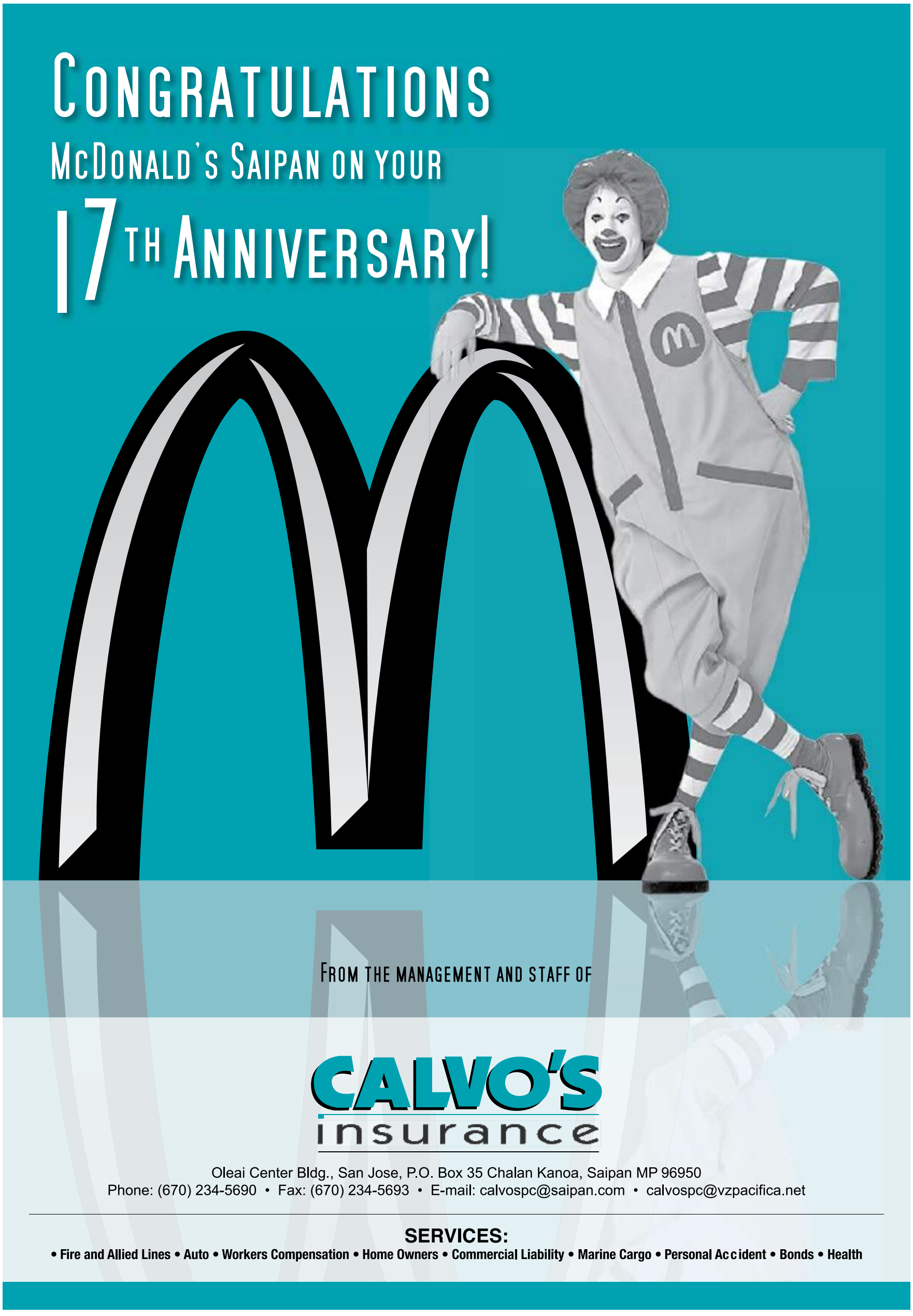
Last November, Leon Guerrero pleaded not guilty to a charge of extortion under color of official right.

He is currently out on bail.

According to the indictment, Leon Guerrero committed extortion in September 2009 by using his position as a police officer to obtain money from the driver of an illegal taxicab in exchange for dismissing the driver's criminal case.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation arrested Leon Guerrero last Nov. 16.

According to FBI special agent Haejun Park, the 43-year-old Leon Guerrero used his official position at the Department of Public Safety to demand and receive payments ranging from $300 to $700 from drivers of illegal taxicabs in exchange for dismissing their criminal case and returning to the drivers the seized vehicles. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***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Accrediting commission sets two-day visit to NMC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges has confirmed a special visit to the Northern Marianas College next month, based on an e-mail announcement disseminated by the college administration.

NMC faculty and staff were informed Friday that the commission set the visit on April 13 through 15. They were told that the visit will focus on matters identified in a letter sent to NMC interim president Lorraine Cabrera on Jan. 29.

In preparation for the visit, interim president Lorraine Cabrera and her assignees will work with select faculty, staff, administrators, and students to demonstrate and make sure that the college complies with all relevant ACCJC eligibility requirements and standards.

Barbara A. Beno, the accrediting commission president, had told NMC about the planned visit in January when it informed the college about the ACCJC's acceptance of NMC's midterm report.

"The commission took this action because it learned of a series of events which may place the college out of compliance with the eligibility requirements, standards of accreditation, and the commission policies," Beno's January letter stated.

Beno also cited the commission's concerns about comments that the midterm report contained some false statements, raising questions about institutional integrity and NMC's adherence to commission policies.

"The visiting team will also examine the institution's integrity in its relationship with the ACCJC/WASC," Beno added in her letter.

Faculty Senate president Larry Lee made the allegations about false statements in the midterm report in a Jan. 3 board meeting.

Board of Regents chair Janet Han King said the visit is not a comprehensive evaluation so the board has no comment on it.

Senators want costly driver's education class suspended

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Senators passed a bill suspending what they described as a costly mandatory driver's education for first-time drivers, until such time that the Public School System or the Department of Public Safety establishes a student driver education program.

At present, the driver's education class costs some $350 per person.

"Most families cannot afford to pay $350 for their child or children to take the driver's education class. As a result, many driving age students do not possess a driver's license but continue to illegally drive on the streets Saipan," said Sen. Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan), author of Senate Bill 17-20.

The Senate passed S.B. 17-20 on March 12, and is on its way to the House of Representatives for action.

There is only one commercial business on Saipan that offers a certified driver's education class for first time drivers.

The Instructional Support Training Services, which owns and operates the Driver Training Academy, is so far the only private entity providing the driver's education course on Saipan since Public Law 15-25 or the Mandatory Driver Education Act of 2006 was enacted. P.L. 15-25 requires the completion and passage of a driver's education course as a prerequisite for the issuance of an initial driver's license within the CNMI.

But because there is no commercial business on Rota or Tinian that presently offers driver's education classes to the public, DPS suspended the mandatory education class requirement for first-time drivers of Rota and Tinian.

"So as it stands, most of the driving age students of Rota and Tinian possess a driver's license and are legally driving on the streets while the Saipan students are illegally driving because they cannot afford to pay for the driver's education class, which is required to obtain their driver's license," said Reyes.

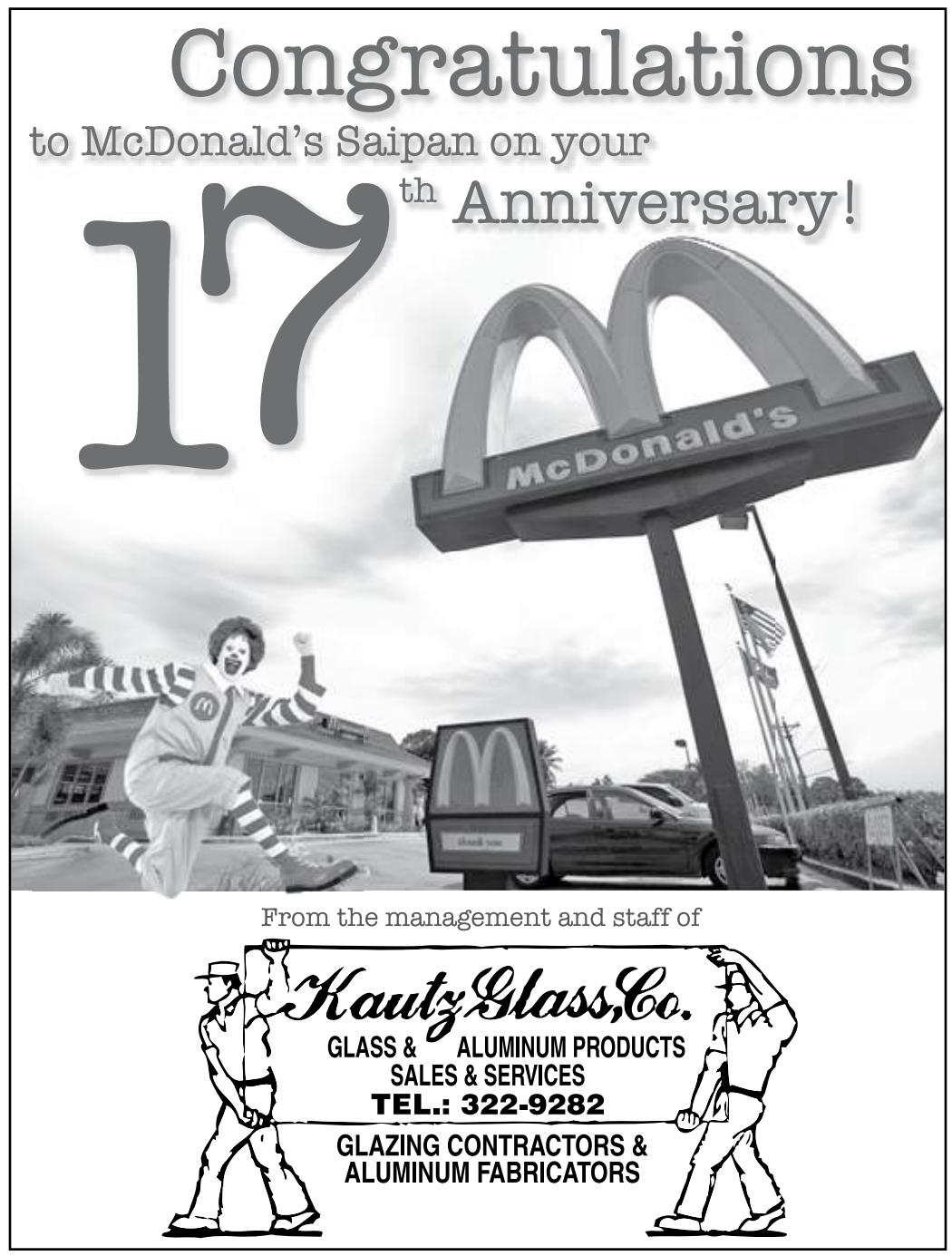
Reyes said this predicament can be resolved if PSS establishes a Student Driver Education Program like many of the public schools in U.S. jurisdictions.

He said the program can be part of the school curriculum and offered each semester and summer of the school year, and PSS can collaborate with DPS as to the driver education curriculum and requirements.

The PSS program shall also be available to non-public school students, the senator said.

Under Reyes' bill, the mandatory driver education prerequisite for all persons applying for the first time for an operator's license as required by P.L. 15-25 shall be temporarily suspended for those persons who are students in the CNMI until such time PSS or DPS establishes a Student Driver Education Program.

The bill defines "student" as a person between the ages of 15 and 18 enrolled in a public or private school in the CNMI.



1st 'Konfirensian Lengguahen Chamorro' is slated for Rota

The Chamorro-English Dictionary Revision Project, a collaborative project between the University of California at Santa Cruz and the CNMI Humanities Council, will be co-sponsoring with various agencies and organizations a Chamorro Language Conference on Rota on April 28 to 30, 2010.

The conference is a special component of the Revision project funded in part by the National Science Foundation and supported by government agencies, several organizations, businesses and community volunteers from Saipan, Tinian and Rota as well as the Chamorro Carolinian Language Commission.

According to the project's co-principal investigators, Drs. Elizabeth D. Rechebei and Sandy Cheung, the main objective of the conference is to examine the place of the Chamorro language in general in the Marianas and in the context of emerging political, social, economic, cultural and general global conditions. The entire conference will be in Chamorro with the exception of two presentations.

"Rota, or Luta as is commonly known, is perhaps, the last remaining island in the Northern Marianas where Chamorro language is still spoken throughout the community. As such, the steering committee selected Rota as the appropriate venue for this important conference," said Glenn H. Manglona, conference chairman.

Keynote speakers are Dr. Sandy Cheung from the University of Santa Cruz, Carmen S. Taimanao, Chamorro language and culture expert; Joseph S. Inos, former mayor of Rota; John Del Rosario, former DPL secretary, Chamorro writer and columnist.

Other guest speakers will include Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Rota Mayor Melchor A. Mendiola, Ignacio Demapan, resident executive director for Indigenous Affairs, Diego M. Songao, chair of the Rota Gaming Commission; Prudencio T. Manglona, former mayor of Rota; Herbert Del Rosario, NMC Archives director; Rita Sablan, Commissioner of Education; William Macaranas from the Chamorro-Carolinian Language Commission; Peter Onedero, University of Guam Chamorro Language professor, to name a few.

Students from the CNMI and Guam will also be presenting their views and work in Chamorro each day of the three-day conference.

The steering committee is inviting students and teachers both in public and private schools from the Commonwealth and Guam. Chamorro clubs from various schools throughout the Commonwealth are urged to make plans to attend.

For more information, contact Manny Borja at 322-0278, Tita Hocog at 532-8333, or Thomas D. Mendiola, Rota Mayor's Office, at 532-9451/2, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Rota's Julita A Calvo, or e-mail at gmanglona@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Fitial meets outgoing, incoming rear admirals

In preparation for the change of command of the Joint Region Marianas U.S. Naval Forces, outgoing commander Rear Adm. Douglass T. Biesel officially introduced the incoming commander, Rear Adm. Paul J. Bushong, to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and the MIMC Policy Committee during a courtesy visit to the Office of the Governor yesterday.

Fitial welcomed Bushong to the Commonwealth and offered well wishes for his new assignment. The governor also expressed his appreciation to Biesel for his service as Joint Region Marianas commander.

After an eight-month stint in the Marianas, Biesel is transferring to Washington D.C. to take on a new assignment.

"Although his service with the Joint Region Marianas was limited, I wish Rear Adm. Biesel the very best on his new assignment. I thank him for his service and, most importantly, his friendship," said Fitial. "I extend a warm *Hafa Adai* welcome to Rear Adm. Bushong as he takes over command of the Joint Region Marianas."

Joint Region Marianas special political adviser Roy Tsutsui accompanied the admirals to the Office of the Governor. Joining the governor on behalf of the CNMI was MIMC coordinator Tom Linden, Ruth Coleman of the Office of Military and Veteran's Affairs, Special Assistant for Management and Budget Virginia Villagomez, and Jim Stump.

At this time, the administration is waiting for the final Environmental Impact Statement to be released in June and the Record of Decision is expected to be released in August. ***(PR)***

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Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 18, 1999

Banks asked: Relax repayments on debt

The House of Representatives has prodded banks and the Commonwealth Development Authority to ease repayment of loans owed to them by various businesses on the island in a step to assist companies facing financial difficulties during the worsening economic crisis. In two resolutions adopted on Tuesday, House members expressed worry over failure by some business owners to meet their obligations, such as loans and credits, due to the current slowdown in economic activities. They asked banks and other financial institutions to help them cope with their problem, saying refinancing loans would give them the flexibility to pay back at lower rates and on longer terms.

House makes plea against wage hike

In a six-hour session on Tuesday, the House of Representatives were more preoccupied in adopting several resolutions, ranging from plea for relief from the economic crisis to an appeal to the U.S. Congress against proposal that will raise minimum wage level in the commonwealth. Members only passed two bills, including appropriation of close to $23 million in capital improvement project funds. While they are not legally binding, but mere expression of a position from the members, the lower house is hoping that they will not end up ignored by concerned parties. In House Resolution 11-140, Rep. Manuel A. Tenorio expressed opposition against a resolution in Congress that will extend the federal minimum wage standards to the CNMI despite the local authority as set forth in the Covenant.

March 18, 2002

BOR to break Eucon decision by mail

The Board of Regents rendered a final decision Friday whether to maintain or revoke Eucon International College's provisional license amid allegations that the private school is not meeting requirements needed to offer postsecondary courses. After deliberating on the matter during an executive session Friday, BOR members announced that they have zeroed in on a decision but will reveal it by mail on March 22. BOR Chair Fermin Atalig said the mail, which will be addressed to Eucon, will include the justifications behind the decision.

Rota hosts 4-day peace summit

At least 100 peace leaders from different parts of the world are expected to attend the four-day peace convention in Rota beginning today-a first surge in the effort to promote the island to other countries. Rota Mayor Benjamin Manglona, together with Prime Minister of Peace Emanuel Schiffgens and Maharishi Global Development Fund Minister of Expansion Shizuo Suzuki, disclosed the sudden decision to gather all peace leaders affiliated with the Global Country of World Peace to a peace summit this week. The summit will give Rota full live coverage and advance promotions to hundreds of countries around the world. An estimated 20,000 teams of engineers immediately worked to set up all antennas that will broadcast the event to different parts of the globe.

March 18, 2003

DPW takes road controversy to court

Public Works Secretary Juan S. Reyes took the controversial Airport Road improvement project to court Friday, asking that his department be declared as the sole authority in determining whether or not the project may have an adverse environmental impact so he could start implementing it. In petitioning the court for judicial review of the Coastal Resources Management Agencies' decision, Reyes and DPW sued the government agencies and their respective representatives, mostly department heads. Named defendants in the lawsuit were CRM and its administrator, Joaquin T. Salas; the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and its executive director, Lorraine A. Babauta; Historical Preservation Office and its representative, Epiphanio E. Cabrera; Division of Environmental Quality and director John I. Castro Jr.; Department of Lands and Natural Resources and representative Marianne Teregeyo; and the CRM Appeals Board.

DPH allocates $500K to fight cancer

The Department of Public Health has allocated some $500,000 as its contribution to the federally funded breast and cervical cancer prevention program. DPH deputy secretary for public health Pete Untalan said the local funding is part of the department's proposed budget for 2004. "The local government can't just stop this very crucial program so we put aside $500,000 for this in our 2004 budget," he said.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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MEMBER
The Associated Press Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Blaming Big Oil

A few years ago, when SUVs still ruled American roads and gasoline prices were skyrocketing, consumers and politicians howled that oil companies were guilty of price-gouging because they refused to increase refinery capacity; the companies responded that it would be crazy to build more refineries to meet a spike in demand that was probably temporary. Now the other shoe has dropped: Demand has fallen through the floor, and oil companies are shutting down refineries as a result. And once again, consumer groups are accusing them of price-gouging.

It's pretty hard to sympathize with Big Oil, but is there any winning this blame game?

High gas prices spark more public outrage than price hikes in any other commodity, even food. Although electric car technology is improving, consumers have few transportation alternatives, so it's tough to respond quickly to higher prices by changing behavior. Expensive gas hits low-income people particularly hard and is a key driver of inflation, which hurts everybody. So the anger directed at oil companies is understandable. It's just that the political responses are usually wrongheaded.

Today's problem isn't so much high prices, which have fallen since 2008. It's that actions by oil companies may be preventing them from dropping as much as they should. The combination of the recession and improved fuel efficiency has greatly reduced demand, and major refiners are considering cutbacks, according to a report by Los Angeles Times staff writer Ronald D. White. Some refineries already have been closed, such as a Delaware facility owned by Valero Energy and a New Jersey plant owned by Sunoco. Industry analysts say there is little choice because of excess capacity, but consumer advocates such as Public Citizen and Santa Monica-based Consumer Watchdog think refiners are just trying to keep the price of gas artificially high by constraining supplies. Some advocates are calling on regulators to probe whether the companies are violating antitrust laws.

Yet such investigations are already ongoing. No industry faces as much federal scrutiny as the oil and gas business, due to the extraordinary public concern about fuel prices. Dozens of probes over two decades have found no clear evidence of market manipulation. A key 2005 report by the Federal Trade Commission concluded that market factors such as supply disruptions, changes in demand and world crude oil prices are the "primary drivers" of gasoline price increases.

Every business makes cutbacks when demand for its products or services falls. We could avoid such market responses from oil companies by nationalizing them or subsidizing gasoline, but that hasn't worked well in the countries that have tried it. Rather than getting mad at the oil giants for exhibiting rational behavior, we should focus on being less reliant on them.

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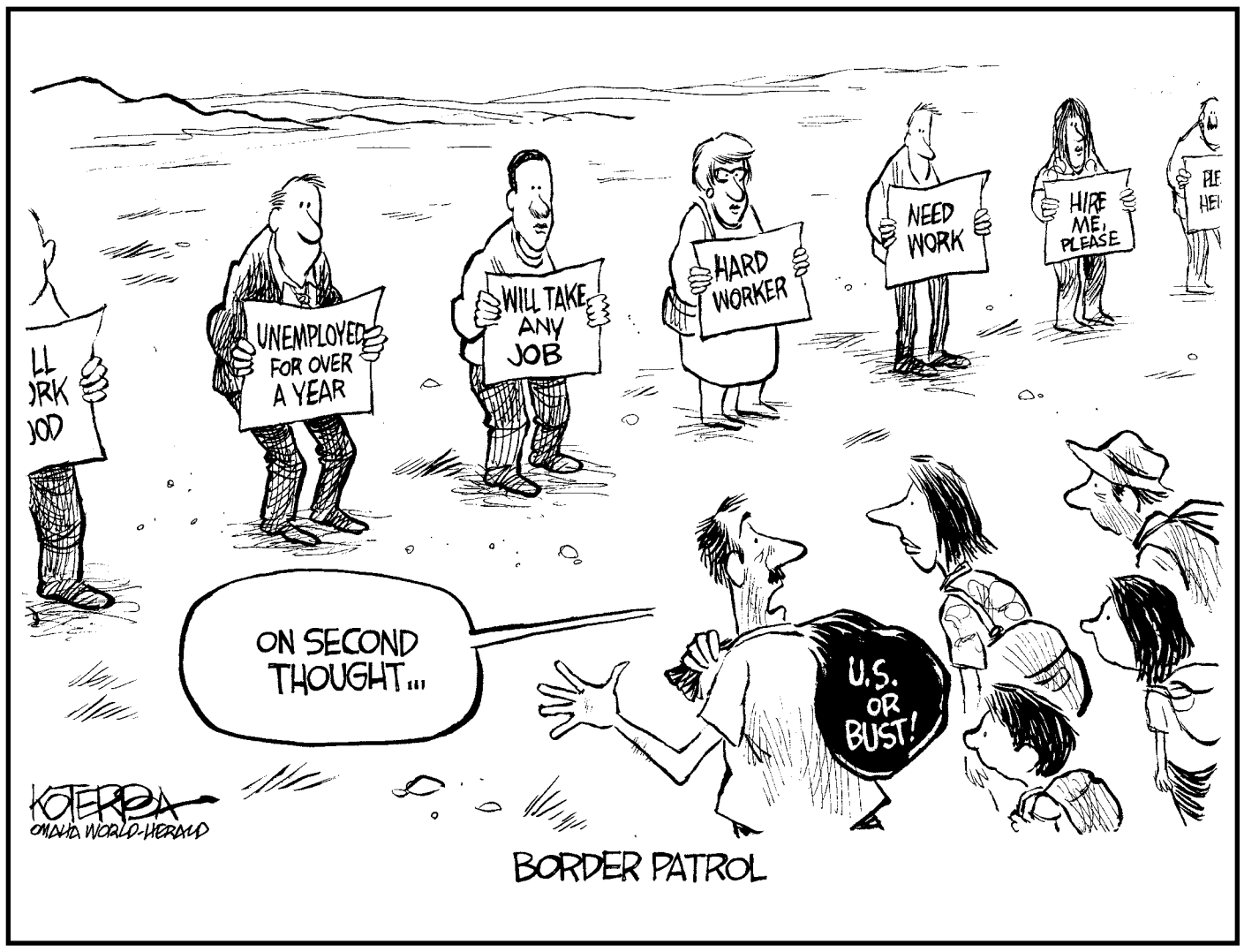


Power struggle over alien labor in the CNMI

By JANE MACK
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

It is clear that the U.S. and the CNMI government authorities do not agree on the meaning of the Consolidated Natural Resource Act, the law that federalized our CNMI immigration. They do not agree on the scope of authority to the U.S. and the limitations of authority on the CNMI.

We have no precedents to guide us. But we have the law and our own common sense. With that in mind, I write to say that I disagree with the CNMI Attorney General's opinion and the CNMI government's actions in the power struggle.

The CNRA explicitly pre-empted admission and removal of aliens from the CNMI. Thus, we now have federal immigration status here; there is no longer any "Commonwealth immigration status of aliens."

The Attorney General's opinion states that the CNRA expressly provides that the Commonwealth immigration status may continue during the transition period, but that statement is inaccurate. The CNRA provides protection from removal and authority to work for those who had such CNMI status on the transition effective date, but it does not "continue" the CNMI alien status. No such status now exists. There can be no CNMI administration of such status.

The CNRA protects those who had such CNMI status on "the transition effective date" from removal for the period of time for which they were granted lawful admission by the CNMI. If they were authorized to work on the transition effective date, they shall be considered authorized "by the Secretary of Homeland Security" to be employed until "the expiration of the alien's employment authorization under the immigration laws of the Commonwealth" or Nov. 27, 2011, whichever is earlier. Both the length of their admission and the authorization to work is determined at the transition effective date.

USCIS has stated that it recognizes the umbrella permit as lawful CNMI admission through Nov. 27, 2011. USCIS also recognizes the umbrella permits that authorized employment as doing so. This authorization by the USCIS is the respect and protection mandated by the CNRA and provides the CNMI with a stable labor pool during this transition. The CNMI government's action, in contrast to what it claims it wants, is disrupting the stability of the labor pool and the labor situation in the CNMI.

Nowhere in the CNRA does it say that the CNMI can retroactively change the period of time for which aliens were granted admission or retroactively change authorization to work.

Nor can the CNMI now take actions that fall within the sphere of immigration. The U.S. District Court in the Fitial challenge to federalization of immigration already acknowledged that alien labor falls within immigration. So now, admission, including all of the conditions related to that admission like authorization for employment, and removal are governed by federal law administered by federal officials, not CNMI law administered by CNMI officials.

The CNMI says that aliens with umbrella permits might not have been able to stay for the full two years if they didn't comply with certain CNMI labor requirements; so, it argues, the CNMI should continue to be allowed to enforce those requirements.

The CNRA does not say this. It does not suggest this. The clarity of the "transition effective date" as the date upon which rights and privileges are determined contradicts this interpretation.

Furthermore, the CNRA expressly gives the U.S. control over the transitional worker program, making it clear that it is the U.S. that is to administer labor and immigration issues during the transition, not the CNMI. It would conflict with the CNRA's transitional worker program administered by the U.S. to allow the CNMI to continue to administer its own alien worker program during the transition.

Even more clearly, the CNRA expressly states that the Secretary of Homeland Security is deemed to have authorized employment for those aliens present and authorized by the CNMI on the transition program effective date; how can the CNMI now revoke the Secretary of Homeland Security's authorization to work?

The CNMI wants to do something different than what the U.S. is doing in the very field that the federal law CNRA deals with—alien labor. The U.S. transition program for alien labor clearly puts this power with the U.S. government. Under the U.S. Supremacy Clause, the federal law pre-empts the CNMI's laws. The Secretary of Homeland Security is deemed to have authorized the employment of aliens as of the effective date of the transition period (Nov. 28, 2009). The CNMI can't revoke the Secretary of Homeland Security's authorization for employment. It can't pass laws or take administrative action now that effect status of any alien or add burdens not contemplated by Congress.

The real shame in all of this is the harm caused by the CNMI's unwillingness to be fair and rational in the transition to U.S. immigration. Granted they didn't want U.S. immigration; but now is the time to realize that we have U.S. immigration. The lawsuit has been lost. The Covenant allows U.S. immigration. Both the CNMI government and the U.S. government are our governments. They now need to work together. The U.S. is willing to do so.

Our CNMI government's refusal to turn over data, the verbal attacks on U.S. officials, the waste of limited CNMI resources by litigating and continuing to press untenable positions are all very seriously harmful to our community. And for employers trying to do business and alien workers here by permission—both caught in the midst of this kerfuffle—the harm is not just lost wages and lost profits, but also stress and worry and uncertainty.

Jane Mack is a Micronesian Legal Services lawyer.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The 60-Day Challenge

"All who have accomplished great things have had a great aim, have fixed their gaze on a goal which was high, one which sometimes seemed impossible." Orison Sweet Marden

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC. They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

You've probably noticed that we've been writing more positive, upbeat articles lately that focus more on your personal response to the world. Even though there are many issues on the local and international level, the only one you can really change is yourself. Sure, you can have an impact on what's going on around you and you can even influence others to pursue a cause, but ultimately people will do what they want to do.

So we've decided to focus our comments on you as an individual and how you can change and improve your current situation. This can happen when you decide to pursue a life of excellence and refuse to become the victim of life's circumstances. Unfortunately, many people choose a life of mediocrity. They perpetually create a life of dissatisfaction by expecting less than the best and settling for whatever comes their way. They become victims within their family, village, and society. They blame their spouse, their boss, or politics for their less than fulfilling existence, and they expect others to take care of them.

One way to fast track your goal to improve is to pursue excellence in one or more of the various roles in your life (mother, father, husband, wife, employee, business owner, etc.). Excellence is not a figurative term; it should be a specific standard that can be used to evaluate your progress toward that end. By committing yourself to excellence you set into motion new dynamics in your thoughts, words, and actions. When you choose excellence as your standard, you will never compromise your quality, talents or high standards. It's possible to become excellent in an instant by making a conscious decision right now to become the best parent, teacher, coach, or business leader. Making that decision puts you on the path of the metaphorical fork in the road, frees you from your past, and paves the way for a new you that you can start living in the present.

If you're with us so far, you're ready to take the next step on your new pathway to excellence by taking the 60-Day Challenge with us. You can start by choosing three to five goals that you want to achieve within the next two months. Then every week in this column we'll share some thoughts and ideas on how you can achieve those goals.

Make the goals challenging and something that will help you achieve excellence in one or more of the roles that you have in life. Your goals must be measurable and the deadline will be on or before May 20. The goals can come from anyone of the five dimensions of life: spiritual, intellectual, physical, social-emotional, and career/work.

Your goals could be learning another language, developing a talent or skill, visiting another country, losing some weight, or kicking a bad habit. You may want to start an exercise program, learn a musical instrument, spend more time with your loved ones, or repair a broken relationship. Perhaps your goal could be to overcome a fear, get a promotion, or make a big sale. Your challenge is to want to become the better version of you and see yourself improving in a specific area.

You can catapult your success if you understand the principle of the harvest: You reap what you sow. In order to achieve a result from accomplishing a goal, you must spend the time working toward that end. Anything you want in life (the effect or result) can be achieved through a cause (a series of actionable steps). If you can find someone who has achieved your ideal of excellence, all you need to do is examine the things they have done, and then do the same things over and over until you eventually enjoy the same results.

You can become whomever you want in this life by firmly fixing the image of that person and putting in the effort that it takes. No effort, no result, little effort reaps little results, and massive effort reaps massive results in a short time. It's your choice. Whatever you want to do in the next 60 days will depend on your goals and the effort you put into it. If you'd like a form to help you write your goals, you can e-mail us.

Imagine what could happen if the majority of people on Saipan refused to become a victim and proactively pursued worthwhile goals. As each person in a family, company or community becomes better; it could inspire others around those individuals to also improve. So, examine the areas of your life where you want to excel and write three to five goals that will challenge you to become your best. Next week we'll discuss how you can make those goals become a reality.

A few thoughts on evaluating pension obligation bonds

By WILLIAM H. STEWART
Special to the Saipan Tribune

William Stewart is an economist, historian, and military cartographer.

There has been some talk about the central government's consideration of floating a $200 million bond to cover its many years of financial neglect of the Retirement Fund, when it should have been making its legally obligated payments to the Fund but didn't—a debt that now totals about $280 million including accrued interest.

All bonds, of whatever type, must be guaranteed by some form of "back-up" revenue source. I hope there is no plan to use the Fund's existing portfolio of investments for this purpose. Or, for that matter, the government's employer contributions, which should but regrettably have not been fully paid and transferred directly to the Fund. Retirees should be forever watchful that this money, which belongs to all retirees and no one else, is never placed in jeopardy or used to guarantee bond payments or their redemption. Any source of funds used to redeem bonds should be paid off from government internal revenue sources and certainly not from money belonging to retirees.

The proceeds from a bond can certainly be invested but if this is done, one hopes the interest earned on the investment is substantially greater than the interest paid on the bond. It can be tricky to keep ahead. Remember, a pension obligation bond is not an interest generating investment for the issuer per se but a debt that accrues interest to the purchaser and must be retired by the issuer within a specified period.

There are just some things you can't escape no matter how hard you try and one is the reputation you get when failing to pay your debts when you should be trying to keep your credit and investment reputation intact by paying your debts.

The NMI central government's neglect in meeting its financial obligation to the Fund and continued refusal to pay in full the millions it owes to members can have a long-term, negative effect on all taxpayers. This adverse impact could be reflected in future bond ratings whenever the government seeks to raise capital through the issuance of general obligation or revenue bonds.

Like everything else, the poorer your reputation in paying your debts, the higher the cost of raising money in the end. Ultimately, in terms of bond financing this added cost translates into short-sightedness on the part of the government as eventually the cost will be transferred to the taxpayers one way or the other. This is one of the possible adverse effects of the NMI government's continued "stiffing" of the members of the Retirement Fund's defined benefit plan. Here's why:

Governments often raise money by issuing revenue bonds to finance certain projects. These bonds are based on the guarantee of repayment entirely from revenue generated by a particular government-owned, income-generating activity such as a power plant or air- or seaport. Usually, any government agency that is run similar to a business (at least in theory) which generates its own operating revenues and expenses is in a position to issue revenue bonds, should the Legislature agree to take on such public indebtedness when revenues exceed expenses.

Another type of borrowing that some governments use to raise money is known as general obligation bonds. These are also used when governments pledge future tax revenues to repay bond holders. Usually, but not always, tax revenues generated by imposing a real estate tax are pledged to make the repayment. Obviously this is not possible in the NMI at this time—but wait awhile when the politicians start scraping the bottom of the barrel for additional revenue.

All members of the Retirement Fund should be forever on the alert that the NMI government does not, repeat does not, pledge either the existing Fund's investment portfolio, or what's left of it, or otherwise pledge the employer's contribution as a guarantee for such bonds. In my conservative judgment, either one would be very bad for the future financial security of all retirees.

> *Retirees should realize they do not owe themselves money; it's the other way around: The government owes the retirees for all the years of non-payment of the government's employer contribution.*

Retirees should realize they do not owe themselves money; it's the other way around: The government owes the retirees for all the years of non-payment of the government's employer contribution.

It's not the responsibility of the retirees to dig themselves out of the financial hole the government has carelessly and thoughtlessly dug. The retirees and their investments, what's left of them, should never ever be required to guarantee any government "bailout" pension bond. In fact such a bond shouldn't even be referred to as a "pension obligation" but rather a "government obligation." The source of revenue for retiree's pensions should not be obligated to pay off any bond in my opinion. All retirees should be ever vigilant to protect their future financial security.

Credit rating agencies such as Fitch, Moody's, Standard & Poor's and others assign credit ratings to governments for certain types of debt obligations as well as to debt instruments (bonds). A credit rating for an issuer (the government) takes into consideration the government's credit worthiness, that is, its past history in paying (or not paying) its debts and its ability to pay back a loan. These factors in turn affect the interest rate applied to the bond and its desirability as an investment for those who purchase the bonds.

A bond is a promise to repay with interest on specific dates the money that an investor has loaned a government (or company). For the investor, government bonds are usually considered safe as they can provide a predictable income stream when stocks perform poorly. They are therefore preferred instruments when an investor does not want to place his or her money at risk in some other investment such as the corporate stock of some companies, (remember Enron, Global Crossing, Tyco International and the WorldCom frauds).

The NMI government's credit rating can be influenced by many factors, among them failure to pay its legal obligation to the Retirement Fund as well as the passage of laws such as PL 15-15 to attempt to legitimatize its failure to pay its debt. Upon learning of this method available to the NMI government as a way to avoid or delay payment of a debt, a bond rating firm is likely to say, "Hello! Well, I'll be a monkey's uncle! That's pretty tricky."

The long term effect of the above can be costly for all NMI taxpayers in the future when the need for bond financing is desired for certain essential infrastructure projects at a time when the government's own revenue sources are either limited or not immediately available.

To be continued.

Editor's note: As a former economist for the NMI with more than four decades of international experience as an economist and foreign investment adviser for development banks and finance institutions in North Africa, the Bahamas, Thailand's Board of Investment and the Inter-American Development Bank, the author offers a perspective and point of view for those interested in island issues. See http://www.saipanstewart.com.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers in the morning becoming partly with isolated showers in the afternoon. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

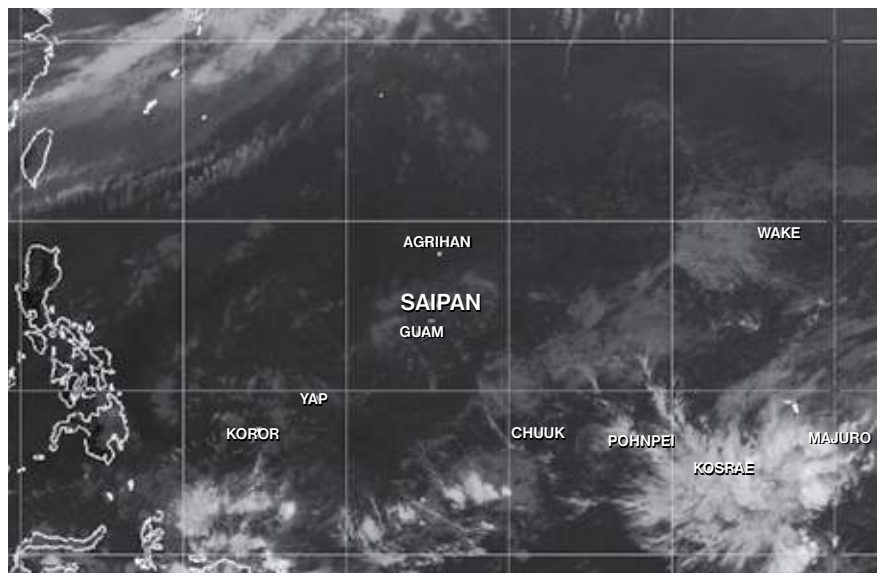
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84	▼75
Palau	Partly Sunny	▲87	▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲87	▼76
Chuuk	Rain	▲87	▼77
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲83	▼80
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲88	▼76
Majuro	Rain	▲84	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲65	▼62
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲45	▼41
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲79	▼70
Honolulu	Showers	▲75	▼68
London	Showers	▲57	▼46
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲76	▼54
Manila	Partly Sunny	▲87	▼74
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲84	▼68
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲74	▼56
New York	Sunny	▲64	▼46
Osaka	Showers	▲51	▼35
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲59	▼47
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲48	▼34
Rome	Sunny	▲58	▼37
Salem	Sunny	▲57	▼32
San Francisco	Sunny	▲66	▼49
Seoul	Sunny	▲41	▼23
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲54	▼39
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲65	▼47

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N141E to beyond 19N130E. Extensive cloudiness and patchy rain are along and up to 400 miles northwest of the front. A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from 2N130E to end at EQ150E. Winds converging near the trough are producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms well southeast of Yap and just south of Chuuk within 120 miles of a line from 2N143E to 6N153E. A tropical disturbance is centered near 4N161E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over Kosrae and Pohnpei are between the equator and 10N from 158E to 168E and scattered showers across the Marshall Islands are within 60 miles of a line from 10N165E to 15N180. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers south and east of the Marianas within 100 miles of a line from 10N140E to 15N155E and near Wake Island between 17N and 24N from 155E to 180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:08 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
8:49 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
3:31 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
9:43 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:23 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:22 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:22 AM	6:28 PM
Sunday	6:21 AM	6:28 PM
Monday	6:20 AM	6:28 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:29 AM	8:22 PM
Friday	8:09 AM	9:15 PM
Saturday	8:53 AM	10:10 PM
Sunday	9:43 AM	11:07 PM
Monday	10:36 AM	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 16, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

DL638	8:00am	10:55am	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	5:50am	8:40am	Daily
DL638/288	8:00am	1:40pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via NGO
DL297	4:35pm	7:30pm	Daily
DL289	4:50pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/933	3:15pm	8:40pm	Daily via GUM
OZ606/703	3:20pm	10:55pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

DL641	9:05pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL290	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
DL298	10:15am	2:45pm	Daily
DL287/641	5:50pm	1:35am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via NGO
DL288	9:00pm	1:40am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
C0934/9596	10:55pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4 ,6 ,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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Sablan's NDA requests focus on correcting inequities

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Rep. Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) has submitted his Member requests to the House Armed Services Committee, as it prepares the annual National Defense Authorization bill. Last year, Sablan used this process to double the number of slots available for Northern Mariana Islands young people who want to attend the U.S. military academies.

"This year, again, I am focusing on correcting inequities in the way the Northern Mariana Islands are treated under federal law," said Sablan. "As the first representative of the Northern Marianas people in Congress, it is one of my most important responsibilities to look for areas of the law where we are not provided the same status as states or the other territories—and work to correct those inequities."

Sablan

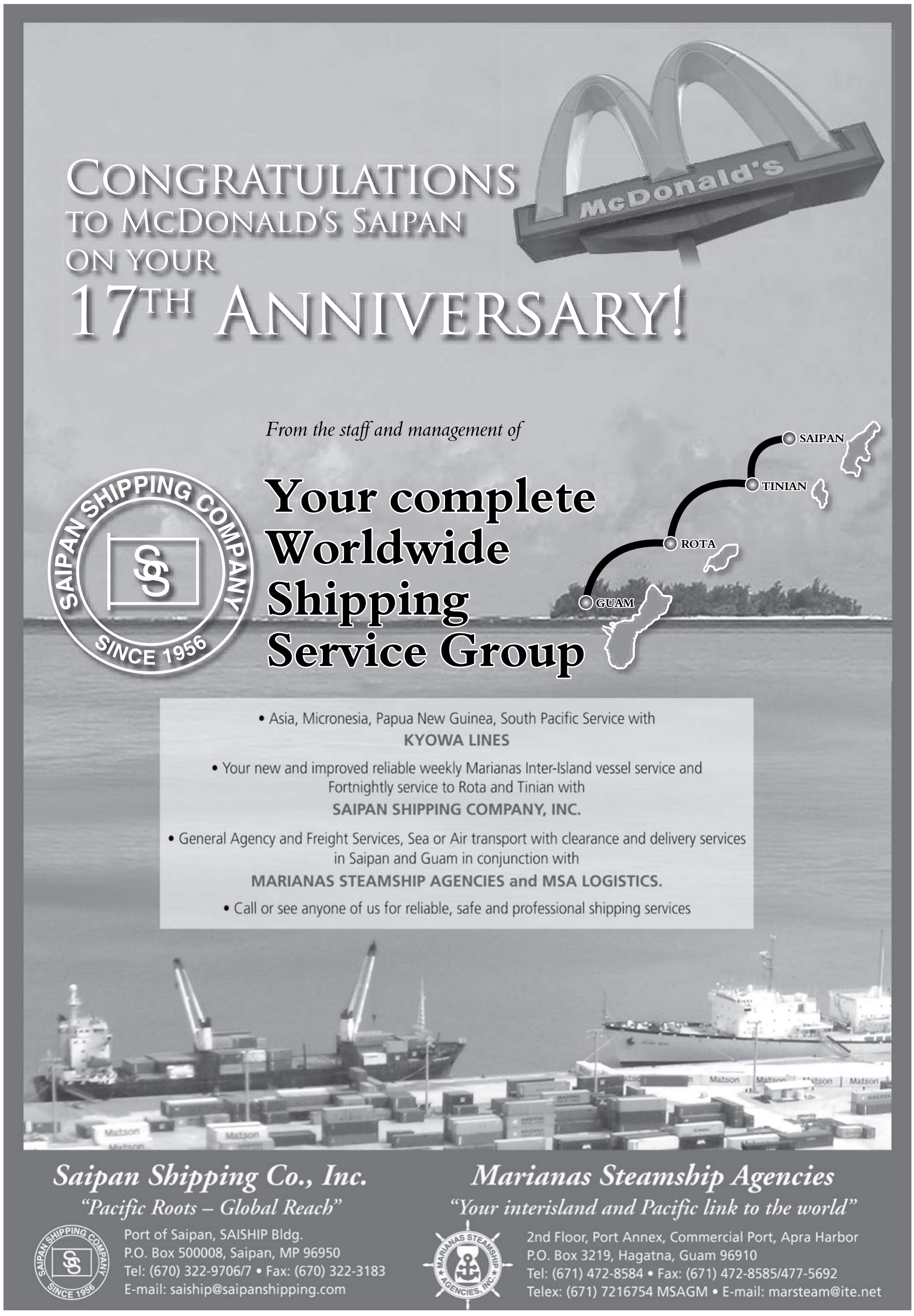
Sablan has submitted four Member requests to the Committee:

1. A feasibility study for the creation of a National Guard unit for the NMI: The Northern Mariana Islands is one of only two jurisdictions in the U.S. without a National Guard unit to respond to local emergencies. Although Guam's National Guard unit also serves the Marianas, its priority has to be to meet the needs of Guam first. Sablan believes Northern Mariana Islands governor needs a Northern Marianas Guard unit to call upon in case of disaster.

2. A feasibility study for the establishment of a Post Exchange in the NMI: Sablan wants the Department of the Army to study the feasibility of establishing a Post Exchange in the Northern Marianas. Currently, there is only a small facility and many military personnel, veterans, and their families consider it inadequate. Sablan has requested language in the Defense Authorization requiring a study of the practicality of upgrading the facility to an Exchange.

3. Merchant Marine Academy nominations for residents of the NMI: When P.L. 110-229 created a seat in Congress for the Northern Mariana Islands, it provided the delegate with authority to make nominations to the U.S. military academies. But nominations to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy were overlooked. Sablan is requesting an amendment to give the NMI delegate the same authority to make nominations to the Merchant Marine Academy that all other members of Congress can provide to their young people who aspire to a career at sea.

4. Expansion of naval vessel overhaul and repair restrictions to the NMI: Responding to a constituent request, Sablan has asked the Armed Services Committee to expand certain restrictions on the overhaul and repair of vessels in foreign shipyards to the Northern Mariana Islands. This would prohibit a naval vessel home ported anywhere in the U.S., including the NMI, from being overhauled, repaired or maintained in a shipyard outside the U.S., including the CNMI, unless in mid-voyage. Currently, the law does not cover a naval vessel with a homeport in the Northern Mariana Islands. ***(PR)***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Advertising Feature

Slew of activities marks McDonald's 17th anniversary

By JOVAN FRED
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EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

McDonald's store manager Marcia Ayuyu poses with the McDonald's Middle Road crew in Chalan Laulau.
JAMMIE EUSTACIO

JAMMIE EUSTACIO
Marcia "Ruri" Ayuyu, second from right, McDonald's store manager and wife of McDonald's owner Joe Ayuyu, poses with, from left, Ana Olaes, Krishna Piol and Marissa Obtinalla at the McDonald's administrative office in Chalan Laulau.

JAMMIE EUSTACIO
Members of the Carlos family have their picture taken inside the McDonald's Chalan Laulau branch. The family has been a very loyal customer of McDonald's since it opened in 1993 and three generations of the family have been regular diners at the restaurant.

McDonald's Saipan today marks a significant milestone—its 17th anniversary—with a series of activities this Saturday that are intended to highlight the company's gratitude to the community for supporting it all these years.

This year's anniversary, which the company will celebrate on March 20 at the McDonald's Chalan Laulau branch, will feature a raffle drawing, a dance crew competition, and food promotions. Activities planned for the day will start at 3pm and end at 8pm.

The raffle drawing will enable McDonald's customers to win a slew of prizes such as a round-trip ticket to Manila, a laptop, a digital camera, and 10 other consolation prizes. McDonald's began issuing the raffle tickets on Feb. 15 to customers who bought $15 worth of food purchases.

Among the highlights of Saturday's celebration is the announcement of the winner of the McDonald's Best Dance Crew Competition. The contest, which had two elimination rounds on March 6 and March 13, narrowed the field to eight dance crews that will face off for the final round on Saturday, starting at 6pm.

"We want to do something different this year, like having the dance competition. We want to have a smooth and happy day for everyone," said Marcia "Ruri" Ayuyu, McDonald's store manager and wife of McDonald's owner Joe Ayuyu. "We will have even more dancing programs on the 20th [anniversary]."

On that day, McDonald's will also offer promotions on certain breakfast and lunch menu. The breakfast promotion is only at the Chalan Laulau branch, while lunch and dinner promotions will include the Garapan branch.

Manny Corpuz, one of the area managers, said, "Our promotions for the customers is to show them our appreciation for their repeat business with us."

Loyal employees

McDonald's Saipan prides itself in its many loyal employees who've worked with the company for many years.

"My husband and I are lucky to have these team [employees]. I put my trust in them, knowing that everything is running well," said Marcia Ayuyu.

Ana Olaes, McDonald's general supervisor, has been with the company for 14 years now.

"I have progressed a lot with my career…and I'm glad that there is no limitation to where and what we can do for the company," said Olaes.

Erlinda Degamon, an employee at the main branch, said, "We work here but we feel like we are more than employees. The boss treats us like family. I love working in the salad area, because my manager and crew are very nice and helpful."

Emmanuel L. Vital, an electrician and maintenance worker, has been with McDonald's since 1993. "The reason why I stayed with the company is because it's very family-oriented and the company itself is good."

Marcia Ayuyu said they always make sure that their employees are up to date in their skills and knowledge of store operations. She attends seminars and other workshops that deal with their fast food business and returns with new ideas to share with their employees.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-10-018

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting seal bids from qualified individuals or firms for the urgent supply of (2) Two CATERPILLAR XQ2000 - 2000 KW Standby / 1825kW Prime generating sets for CUC Rota Power Plant, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The generator sets will be used to power the island of Rota, while CUC take down existing generators for major engine overhaul and rehabilitation. The existing generator sets on Rota are seriously overdue for overhauls and the power situation on Rota is very critical.

Due to this critical situation in Rota and the need for fast delivery and installation of two new generator sets the 1825kW Prime XQ2000 CATERPILLAR was selected. If availability of Brand New Modules exceeds ninety (90) days, only Used Modules with low hours will be considered.

A site visit and pre-bid meeting is not planned, but bidders who wish to visit Rota power plant will be permitted with prior approval. All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on part of the proposers due to a lack of information or understanding of the plant site conditions in the course of the Contractor's preparation of a bid or performance of work under the contract.

The Scope-of-Work and Bid package will be **e-mailed** upon request, to all interested bidders, by the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, during working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), Monday thru Friday, except government observed holidays, **until March 29, 2010.**

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a seal envelope marked **"IFB 10-018 Two XQ2000 CATERPILLAR Generating Modules"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, Room No. 4, 3rd Floor Joeten Dandan, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan MP 96950, no later than **Tuesday, April 06, 2010 at 10:00 AM**, local time, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

Local Bidders (CNMI based business) will be required to submit a copy of a CNMI Business License upon notice of award of contract. Off-island Bidders (Non-CNMI based business) are excluded from the requirement of submitting a copy of a CNMI Business license upon notice of award of contract.

With respect to bidders' employment of labor as an element of a bid, the Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less that the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page —http://www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/cnmi/cnmi.htm. The contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CUC Procurement Regulations. CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and wave any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

All Inquires must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM local time on **Thursday April 02, 2010** to Mr. Manuel B. Sablan, Jr., Purchasing Officer via email at msablan@cucgov.net and Mr. Wallon Young, Deputy Director Power System Rehabilitation via email at wallon59@yahoo.com.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Acting Executive Director

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-DEQ-086

SUBMISSION: APRIL 20, 2010 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"CONDUCT OF ASTM PHASE I & PHASE II ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT OF BRONWFIELDS ON SAIPAN FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"

THE SCOPE OF WORK IS AVAILABLE ON OR AFTER MARCH 18, 2010 AT THE DEQ OFFICE LOCATED IN THE GUALO RAI CENTER BUILDING, SAIPAN OR ELECTRONICALLY BY E-MAIL REQUEST TO raymasga@deq.gov.mp.

A PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR **APRIL 06, 2010 AT 10:00 A.M.** IN THE 2ND FLOOR DEQ CONFERENCE ROOM (Rm. 205). QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PROJECT MAY BE SUBMITTED BY FACSIMILE TO **MR. RAY MASGA, MANAGER**, AT (670) 664-8540 OR BY E-MAIL AT raymasga@deq.gov.mp NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS **APRIL 09, 2010.**

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS ***NOT AVAILABLE***, BECAUSE IT'S USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

/s/ **FRANK M. RABAULIMAN**
DIRECTOR OF DEQ

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP10-OVR-085

SUBMISSION: APRIL 20, 2010 • TIME: 3:00 P.M.

"INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES FOR THE OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION"

THE RFP PACKAGE MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWERBASE, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-SUBMISSION ORIENTATION WILL BE CONDUCTED AT THE OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION, NAVY HILL, SAIPAN AT **10:00 A.M., APRIL 09, 2010.** PROSPECTIVE OFFERORS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THIS ORIENTATION.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT IS PROVIDED BY THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009 (ARRA).

/s/ **MARGARITA OLOPAI-TAITANO**
DIRECTOR OF OVR

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

Business

Bernanke to wage fresh battle for Fed powers

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke plans to wage a fresh battle against Senate efforts to scale back the Fed's role in supervising the nation's banks.

In testimony prepared for a House hearing on Wednesday obtained by The Associated Press, Bernanke argued that the Fed factors in information it gets from its role as a regulator into its decisions on interest rates. And, Bernanke said its banking duties give the Fed insights into the health of the entire banking system.

"The insights provided by our role in supervising a range of banks, including community banks, significantly increases our effectiveness in making monetary policy and fostering financial stability," Bernanke said in his prepared remarks to the House Financial Services Committee.

■ ■ ■

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Federal Reserve on Tuesday repeated its pledge to hold interest rates at record lows to foster the economic recovery and ease high unemployment.

But the Fed's assessment of the economy at its meeting Tuesday was a bit more upbeat. It said the job market is stabilizing. That was an improvement from its January statement, when it said the deterioration in the labor market was abating.

It also said business spending on equipment and software has risen significantly, also an upgrade from its last assessment. Still, the Fed cautioned that spending by consumers could be dampened by high unemployment, sluggish wage growth, lower wealth and tight credit. And it noted weakness in the commercial real-estate and home-building markets.

"The Fed painted the economy in a slightly brighter shade," said Stuart Hoffman, chief economist at PNC Financial Services Group. "It's been painted black for so long. Now, it is a lighter shade of gray."

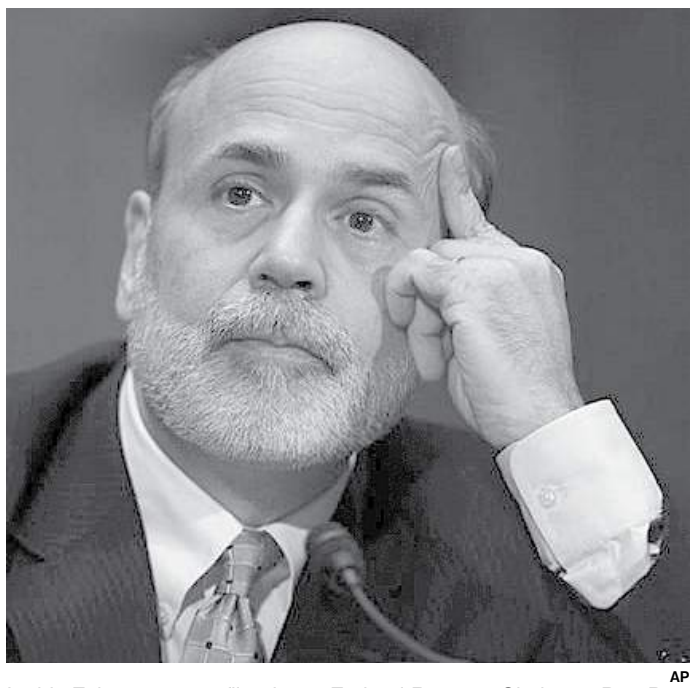
■ ■ ■

Bernanke's testimony comes as the Fed faces a significant shift in its supervisory duties.

In his effort to overhaul the nation's financial regulatory structure, Senate Banking Committee Chairman Christopher Dodd, D-Conn. has offered legislation that would strip the Fed of its power to supervise state-chartered banks and bank holding companies with assets of less than $50 billion.

That would leave the Fed with 35 of the biggest bank holding companies under its supervision. Dodd's bill, however, would also give the Fed new powers to oversee nonbank financial firms that are so large and interconnected that their failure could pose a risk to the economy.

Such firms could include insurance giant American International Group Inc., or General Electric Co.'s GE Capital.



AP

In this Feb. 25, 2010 file photo, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Honda to recall 410,000 vehicles for brake issue

DETROIT (AP)—Honda Motor Co. will recall more than 410,000 Odyssey minivans and Element small trucks because of braking system problems that could make it tougher to stop the vehicle if not repaired.

The recall includes 344,000 Odysseys and 68,000 Elements from the 2007 and 2008 model years.

Honda said in a statement that over time, brake pedals can feel "soft" and must be pressed closer to the floor to stop the vehicles. Left unrepaired, the problem could cause loss of braking power and possibly a crash, Honda spokesman Chris Martin said.

"It's definitely not operating the way it should, and it's safety systems, so it brings it to the recall status," he said.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has reported three crashes due to the problem with minor injuries and no deaths, Martin said. Honda notified NHTSA of the recall on Monday, he said.

Honda has traced the problem to the device that powers the electronic stability control system, which selectively brakes each of the wheels to keep the vehicles upright during an emergency situation.

When the device, called a "vehicle stability assist modulator," tests itself when the vehicles are started, it allows a small amount of air into the hydraulic brake lines. Over time, an air bubble in the lines can cause a loss of braking power and require that the pedal be pushed farther toward the floor than normal to stop the vehicles, Martin said.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Oil above $82 as traders eye US supplies, OPEC

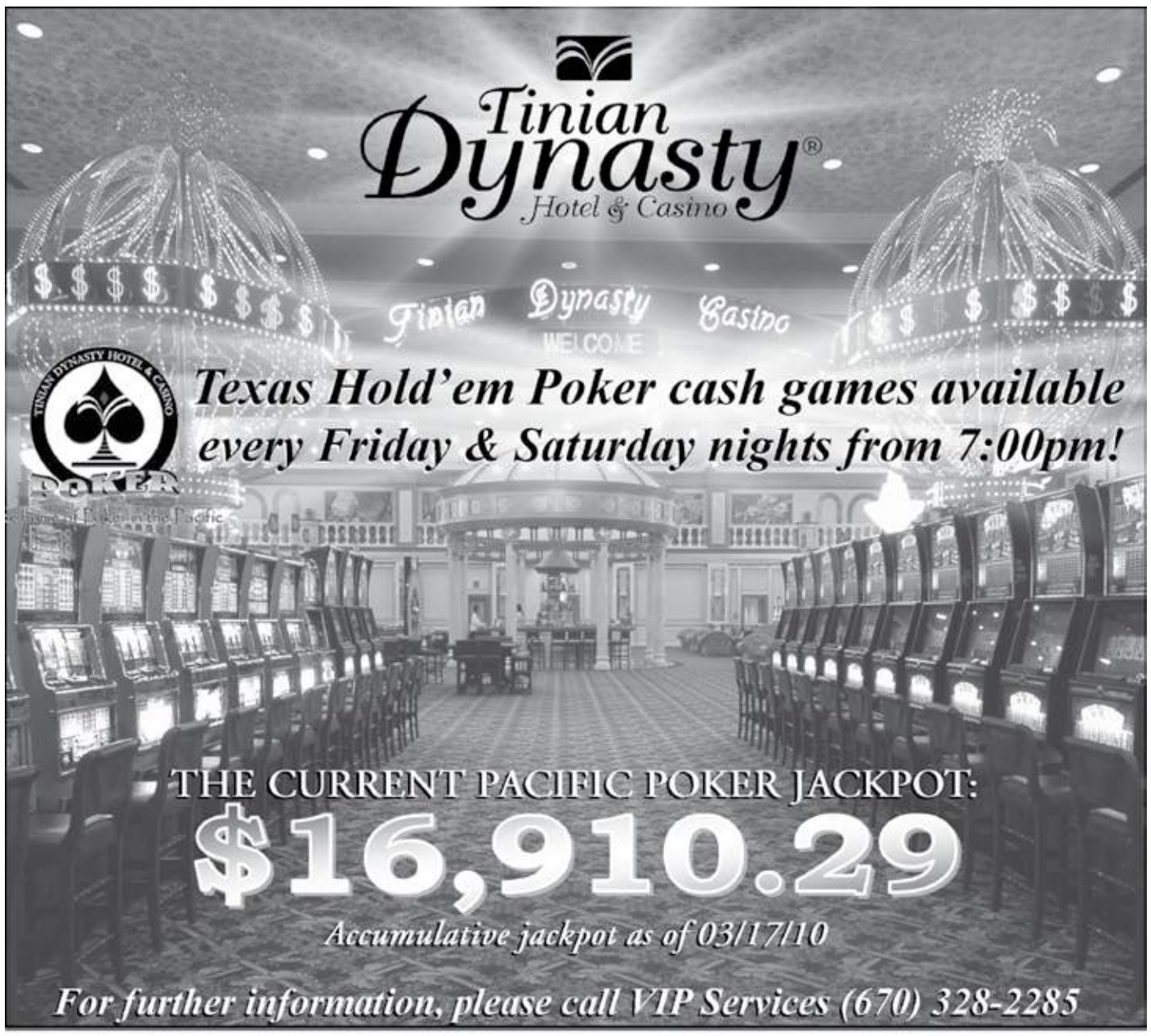
SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices rose above $82 a barrel Wednesday in Asia after a report showed U.S. crude inventories grew less than expected last week. Benchmark crude for April delivery was up 38 cents to $82.08 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract rose $1.90 to settle at $81.70 on Tuesday after the Federal Reserve said it plans to hold interest rates at record lows.

CIT Group posts 4Q loss of $1 billion

NEW YORK (AP)—CIT Group on Tuesday said it lost $1 billion in the fourth quarter, excluding a huge one-time reorganization benefit. The company also recorded a full-year loss of $4 million as losses from bad loans more than offset financial benefits from its bankruptcy reorganization. The commercial lender emerged from bankruptcy protection on Dec. 10. Results for the year include a $10.3 billion pre-tax benefit from the reorganization.

Housing construction drops 5.9 pct in February

WASHINGTON (AP)—Housing construction fell in February as winter blizzards held down activity in the Northeast and South. The decline highlighted the challenges facing builders as they struggle to emerge from the worst housing slump in decades. The Commerce Department said Tuesday that construction of new homes and apartments fell 5.9 percent in February to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 575,000 units, slightly higher than the 570,000 that economists were expecting. January activity was revised up to a pace of 622,000 units, the strongest showing in 14 months.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Nation

Holder: Osama bin Laden will never face US trial

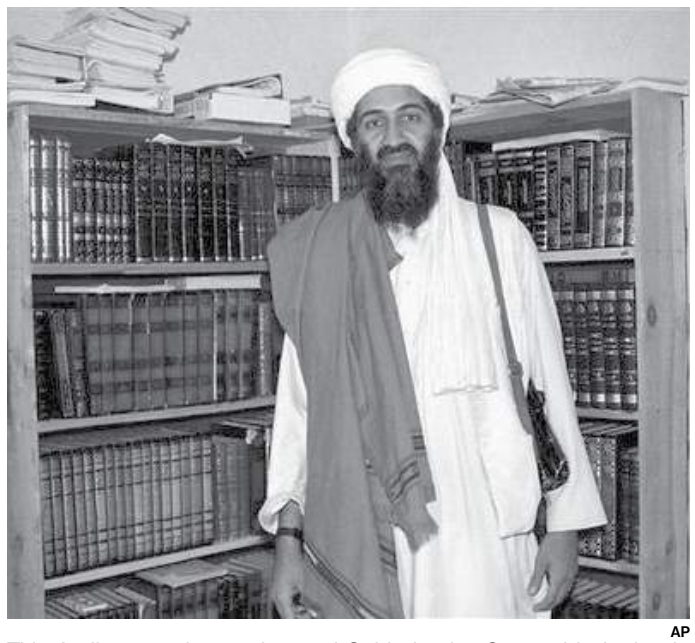
WASHINGTON (AP)—Attorney General Eric Holder told Congress on Tuesday that Osama bin Laden will never face trial in the United States because he will not be captured alive.

In testy exchanges with House Republicans, the attorney general compared terrorists to mass murderer Charles Manson and predicted that events would ensure "we will be reading Miranda rights to the corpse of Osama bin Laden" not to the al-Qaida leader as a captive.

Holder sternly rejected criticism from GOP members of a House Appropriations subcommittee, who contend it is too dangerous to put terror suspects on trial in federal civilian courts as Holder has proposed.

The attorney general said it infuriates him to hear conservative critics complain that terrorists would get too many rights in the court system.

Terrorists in court "have the same rights that Charles Manson would have, any other kind of mass murderer," the attorney general said. "It doesn't mean that they're going to be coddled, it doesn't mean that they're going to be treated with kid gloves."



AP

This April 1998 picture shows al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan.

The comparison to convicted killer Manson angered Rep. John Culberson, R-Texas, who said it showed the Obama administration doesn't understand the American public's desire to treat terrorists as wartime enemies, not criminal defendants.

Late-innings hardball in health care push

WASHINGTON (AP)—With time and tempers short, everyone's playing hardball in the drive to pass—or stop—President Barack Obama's massive health care legislation by the weekend.

Business groups are spending $1 million a day to depict the bill as a job killer in television ads in the home districts of 26 wavering House Democrats. A new ad barrage from supporters of the legislation went up Tuesday in 11 districts, some overlapping. And unions are threatening some of those lawmakers to come through for Obama—or pay the price in the fall elections.

Obama has summoned members to the White House one by one for private, face-to-face persuasion, and also met larger groups. White House aides said he plans at least one more public health care event this week, including remarks in Fairfax, Va., on Friday. Diverse administration resources are being employed: Even the Navy secretary is in the game.

"We here in Congress are giving a new meaning to March madness," Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, an opponent of the legislation, said Tuesday.

At stake is a bill that would cover some 30 million uninsured people, end insurance practices such as denying coverage to those with a pre-existing conditions, require almost all Americans to get coverage by law and try to slow the cost of medical care nationwide. The comprehensive legislation could affect nearly every American, from those undergoing annual checkups to people facing major surgery.

Asia

Thai protesters pour own blood at government HQ

BANGKOK (AP)—Thai protesters seeking a change of government turned to shock tactics Tuesday, pouring gallons of their own blood into a glistening puddle at the gate of the prime minister's office.

The dramatic gesture, repeated in front of the headquarters of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiava's Democrat Party, grabbed attention but put the "Red Shirt" protest movement no closer to its goal of forcing new elections.

More than 100,000 demonstrators from all over the country gathered in Bangkok on Sunday, vowing to keep up their protest until victory. But Abhisit has rejected their demands to dissolve Parliament, saying only that he will listen to the protesters' point of view and leaving the situation in a stalemate.

Reporters asked one of the protest leaders what their next move would be, and Veera Musikapong replied, "I want to know that myself." He said the group maps strategy on a day-by-day basis.

Trouble in Thailand
Supporters of ousted Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra have been protesting against Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, demanding that he resign and call elections.
At a glance
Population 66 million (2009 estimate); 75 percent Thai; 14 percent Chinese; 11 percent other
GDP per person $8,100; primarily industry and services
Government Constitutional monarchy
Brief history Kingdom known as Siam until 1939; bloodless revolution led to constitutional monarchy in 1932; never taken over by a European power
600 km
600 miles
Vietnam
Laos
Thailand
Bangkok
Cambodia
Gulf of Thailand
Yellow Shirts vs. Red Shirts Key events in current conflict
2006 Yellow Shirts protest to oust Thaksin
December 2006 Thaksin ousted in coup
December 2007 Thaksin allies win elections
September 2008 Yellow Shirts occupy buildings, clash with pro-Thaksin Red Shirts
November 2008 Yellow Shirts occupy airports
December 2008 Thaksin-allied government fails, Abhisit forms government
April 2009 Red Shirts protest ASEAN summit, clash with Yellow Shirts
March 2010 Red Shirts try to bring down government
Source: CIA World Factbook, BBC, ESRI
Graphic: Pat Carr
© 2010 MCT

The protesters comprise supporters of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted by a 2006 military coup for alleged corruption, and pro-democracy activists who opposed the army takeover. They believe Abhisit came to power illegitimately with the connivance of the military and other parts of the traditional ruling class who were alarmed by Thaksin's popularity, particularly among the poor.

Indonesian militants recruit fighters in video

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia (AP)—From the safety of a forest camp, a commander of a new Indonesian militant group looks into a camera and ridicules the notorious extremist group Jemaah Islamiyah: They are not violent enough, come and join us, he shouts, an automatic rifle in one hand.

The emergence of the previously unknown group calling itself al-Qaida in Aceh shows how Southeast Asian militants are adapting even amid a Western-funded crackdown that began following the 2002 Bali nightclub bombings and has taken out scores of top leaders.

The group's criticism of Jemaah Islamiyah is further evidence of the split in Indonesian extremist networks between militants supporting al-Qaida-style attacks inside the country and those who believe such attacks hurt the longer-term aim of establishing a Muslim state in Southeast Asia.

The speech is contained on a 75-minute training, recruitment and propaganda video obtained by The Associated Press from a person not affiliated with the militant group. It contains scenes of about 15 militants exercising on monkey bars, shooting automatic weapons and preaching in a makeshift camp in the western province of Aceh that was raided last month by anti-terrorist police.

ACROSS THE NATION

Ivy League's Cornell responds to 3 gorge deaths

ITHACA, N.Y. (AP)—Cornell University, an Ivy League school known for its spectacular gorges and haunted by a reputation for suicides, took the extraordinary step of posting lookouts on bridges and going door-to-door to check on students after three undergrads plunged to their deaths in the past month. The move by university officials comes after what one Cornell administrator called an "especially painful week" marred by two of the deaths. It's not clear if all three were suicides; university spokeswoman Claudia Wheatley said Tuesday that while school officials could not discuss the individual cases, one case was ruled a suicide and the other two were under investigation. Cornell officials insist the school's suicide rate is in line with the national average of 1.5 per year at universities. Timothy Marchell, director of mental health initiatives, blamed the gorges for the bad reputation.

Brazen Conn. warehouse heist nets $75M in pills

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—In a Hollywood-style heist, thieves cut a hole in the roof of a warehouse, rappelled inside and scored one of the biggest hauls of its kind—not diamonds, gold bullion or Old World art, but about $75 million in antidepressants and other prescription drugs. The pills—stolen from the pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly & Co. in quantities big enough to fill a tractor-trailer—are believed to be destined for the black market, perhaps overseas. "This is like the Brink's pill heist," said Erik Gordon, a University of Michigan business professor who studies the health care industry. "This one will enter the folklore."

Woman tells of attack similar to San Diego teen's

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A 23-year-old woman allegedly attacked by a registered sex offender at the same park where he is accused of killing a San Diego teenager two months later said Tuesday that she believed he was going to rape her. Appearing on CNN's "Larry King Live," Candice Moncayo said she'll testify against 30-year-old John Gardner, who has pleaded not guilty to assaulting her in December and murdering 17-year-old Chelsea King in February. King's parents also appeared on the show and said it was painful to hear Moncayo's story.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Fiji cyclone damage overwhelming, leader says

SUVA, Fiji (AP)—The South Pacific island nation of Fiji has suffered overwhelming damage from a powerful cyclone that battered its shores for more than three days, the prime minister said Wednesday as relief operations were launched in the country's northern regions. Fiji sent naval patrol boats laden with supplies and support staff sailing for the northern islands that bore the full brunt of the storm, while Australian and New Zealand air force planes began airlifting emergency supplies to the island group. Only one death has been reported, but the full extent of the damage has yet to be determined because communications to the hardest hit areas were cut off for days.

Officials: 2 US missile attacks kill 9 in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Suspected U.S. drones fired missiles at vehicles and hit a militant hide-out in a tribal region of northwestern Pakistan on Wednesday, killing at least nine insurgents, two officials said. In the first attack, the drones fired four missiles at a vehicle and flattened a nearby house near Miran Shah, the main town in North Waziristan tribal region, killing six militants, an army and an intelligence official said. About 50 minutes later, drones fired three more missiles at a vehicle in the Madakhel town, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) west of Miran Shah, killing three insurgents, said the officials on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

Landslide in Philippines kills 5 workers

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine police say five construction workers have died after the land they were digging collapsed and buried them. Senior Superintendent Gerardo Rosales said Wednesday the workers were preparing the foundation for a house in southern Cagayan de Oro city when the landslide occurred. Rescuers retrieved the bodies shortly after Tuesday's landslide. Rosales says investigators are looking into the possibility the construction company failed to implement safety measures. The weather was fine when the landslide happened.

World

Women, girls rape victims in Haiti quake aftermath

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—When the young woman needed to use the toilet, she went out into the darkened tent camp and was attacked by three men.

"They grabbed me, put their hands over my mouth and then the three of them took turns," the slender 21-year-old said, wriggling with discomfort as she nursed her baby girl, born three days before Haiti's devastating quake.

"I am so ashamed. We're scared people will find out and shun us," said the woman, who suffers from abdominal pain and itching, likely from an infection contracted during the attack.

AP

In this photo taken March 14, 2010, women wait to receive medical attention for them and their children outside the women's clinic run by the Jenkins-Penn Haiti Relief Operation, at the makeshift camp for earthquake survivors in the Petionville Golf Club in Port-au-Prince.

Women and children as young as 2, already traumatized by the loss of homes and loved ones in the Jan. 12 catastrophe, are now falling victim to rapists in the sprawling tent cities that have become home to hundreds of thousands of people.

With no lighting and no security, they are menacing places after sunset. Sexual assaults are daily occurrences in the biggest camps, aid workers say—and most attacks go unreported because of the shame, social stigma and fear of reprisals from attackers.

Challenger overtakes Iraq PM in overall vote count

BAGHDAD (AP)—A secular coalition challenging the Iraqi prime minister in the country's historic parliamentary elections has narrowly pulled ahead for the first time in the overall vote count, although it still trails in the crucial province-by-province count.

The Iraqiya coalition, led by former Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, seemed to be gaining momentum, taking a 9,000 vote lead nationwide, according to new totals released late Tuesday. But with about 20 percent of the votes still to be counted from the March 7 election, it was unclear whether that margin would give Allawi more seats in parliament, which will determine who will lead the government.

The news came as Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and his State of Law coalition accused election officials of manipulating vote counts and called for a re-count, a candidate from his bloc said. It was the prime minister's first challenge to the results, and his bloc drew a link between its accusations and Allawi, accusing some electoral commission staff of having allegiances to groups backing al-Maliki's rival.

FBI: No evidence Mexico hit men targeted Americans

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (AP)—Confused hit men may have gone to the wrong party, the FBI said Tuesday as it cast doubt on fears that the slaying of three people with ties to the U.S. consulate shows that Mexican drug cartels have launched an offensive against U.S. government employees.

Gunmen chased two white SUVs from the birthday party of a consulate employee's child on Saturday and opened fire as horrified relatives screamed. The two near-simultaneous attacks left three adults dead and at least two children wounded.

The working theory, described to the AP by FBI spokeswoman Andrea Simmons, drives home just how dangerous Ciudad Juarez has become—and just how vulnerable those who live and work there can be, despite the Mexican government's claims that most victims are drug smugglers.

WORLD BRIEFS

Clashes erupt in Jerusalem; US envoy cancels trip

JERUSALEM (AP)—Hundreds of Palestinians in east Jerusalem set tires and garbage bins ablaze on Tuesday and hurled rocks at Israeli riot police, who responded with rubber bullets and tear gas. The heaviest clashes in months broke out as an American envoy abruptly canceled a visit, deepening a U.S.-Israeli diplomatic feud. The violence spread from Arab neighborhood to Arab neighborhood across the eastern side of the volatile city. Angered by plans for more Jewish housing in predominantly Arab east Jerusalem and unsubstantiated rumors surrounding the rededication of an Old City synagogue, Palestinians clashed with Israeli forces throughout the day. In one incident, youths hoisted a giant Palestinian flag and shouted, "We shall die and Palestine shall live."

German bishop surprised at number of abuse cases

BERLIN (AP)—The Roman Catholic bishops in Pope Benedict XVI's native Bavaria sought Tuesday to deal with a sexual abuse scandal whose ever-widening scope has left church leaders baffled. "I would not have expected such a multitude of cases," Bavarian Bishop Ludwig Schick, who is hosting his colleagues' meeting at Vierzehnheiligen, told Bayerischer Rundfunk Radio. He said he was shaken and ashamed of what had taken place within the church. "It is bitter and it is hard, but it has to be dealt with," Schick said. "This festering blister needs to be opened up and dried out in order for it to heal."

New Colombian party linked to right-wing gangs

BOGOTA (AP)—A new party accused of ties to far-right criminal bands has emerged as a surprising force in Colombian politics, adding to worries that President Alvaro Uribe has failed to weaken drug-funded paramilitaries in the provinces. Voters made the Party of National Integration, or PIN, Colombia's fourth-strongest party in Sunday's election to replace a Congress already badly tarnished by lawmaker links to far-right militias. The party is comprised in large part by relatives and friends of lawmakers jailed or under investigation for alleged paramilitary links but denies any links with criminals. It won nearly a million votes in elections dominated by Uribe allies.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH MARCH 2010

Friday, March 19, 2010 - SAIPAN

To the General Public: Notification of Change of Venue

"The Power of Cooperative Doing – The Act of Empowering Others Empowers You!" Event will be held at the Fiesta Resort & Spa - Saipan

REGISTRATION
Venue: Hibiscus Hall, Fiesta Resort & Spa - Saipan
Time: 7:30am - 8:00am

INTRODUCTION OF KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
Facilitators: Raymond D. Diaz & Lillian Ada, CDD Staff
Venue: Hibiscus Hall, Fiesta Resort & Spa - Saipan
Time: 8:00am -8:45am

SELF-ADVOCACY
Presenters: Cynthia Susan Berkheimer, Laura Marie Matthews -Self Advocates and Connie Sue DeHerrera - Program Coordinator, Center for Self Advocacy, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Venue: Hibiscus Hall, Fiesta Resort & Spa - Saipan
Time: 8:45am - 10:00am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS 10:10am – 11:30am

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY & EDUCATION – Session 1
Presenters: Christie L. Sablan, Jerry McVicar, and Greg Borja CNMI Assistive Technology Program & Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems, Inc.
Venue: Azucena II, Fiesta Resort & Spa - Saipan

LEADERSHIP – Session 2
Presenters: Cynthia Susan Berkheimer, Laura Marie Matthews -Self Advocates and Connie Sue DeHerrera - Program Coordinator, Center for Self Advocacy, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Venue: Hibiscus Hall, Fiesta Resort & Spa - Saipan

LUNCHEON KEYNOTE: DISABILITY CULTURE
Presenter: **STEVEN E. BROWN**, *Ph.D., Associate Professor and Disabilities Scholar, Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawai`i, Manoa*
Venue: Hibiscus Hall, Fiesta Resort & Spa - Saipan
Time: 11:30am - 12:45pm

CONCURRENT SESSIONS 12:45pm – 2:00pm

SELF-ADVOCACY-"KNOW YOURSELF" Session 1
Presenter: Marissa F. Guerrero, Northern Marianas College - University Centers for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities
Venue: Azucena I, Fiesta Resort & Spa - Saipan

HOW TO SCHMOOZE YOUR LEGISLATOR – Session 2
Presenters: Cynthia Susan Berkheimer, Laura Marie Matthews -Self Advocates and Connie Sue DeHerrera - Program Coordinator, Center for Self Advocacy, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Venue: Hibiscus Hall, Fiesta Resort - Saipan

R.O.P.E.S. – Session 3
Presenters: Tom Thornburgh & Greg Borja, Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc.
Venue: Azucena II, Fiesta Resort - Saipan

Note: For more information please call the Office of the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities at 664-7000/1/ Seating is limited.

Environment

Interior: Climate change threatens migratory birds

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Global climate change poses a significant threat to migratory bird populations, which are already stressed by the loss of habitat and environmental pollution, according to a report released Thursday.

U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar joined scientists and conservation organizers at an Austin news conference to release the study, "The State of the Birds: 2010 Report on Climate Change."

The report says oceanic birds, such as petrels and albatrosses, are at particular risk from a rapidly changing marine ecosystem and rising sea levels.

Birds in arid regions and forests show less vulnerability to climate change, but the report says many species struggling in arid regions now, including the endangered golden-cheeked warbler and black-capped vireo in Texas, could be further imperiled by shifting climate conditions.

AP
Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar speaks during a news conference for the 2010 "State of the Birds Report" at the Zilker Botanical Gardens in Austin, Texas on Thursday, March 11, 2010.

"Birds are messengers that tell us what is going on in our environment," Salazar said. "For too long, in my view, we have stood idle as the climate changes and as the crisis has grown."

A 2009 report on bird populations found nearly a third of the nation's 800 bird species are endangered, threatened or in decline due to challenges such as the loss of wetlands, commercial hunting and pesticides.

Last year's "State of the Birds" report also mentioned climate change as a threat to birds. But the 2010 report focuses on that factor as a significant danger to their habitats and food supplies.

All 67 ocean bird species in U.S. waters are at medium to high vulnerability to climate change, according to the study. Seabirds tend to have low reproductive potential and often nest on islands that can be inundated by rising sea levels, changes in water chemistry and other disruptions to the marine ecosystem. Hawaiian birds are among those in greatest peril.

The report cites increased threats to bird populations from deeper and longer droughts, more intense flooding, hotter fire seasons and other weather phenomena associated with climate change.

In Texas, Republican Gov. Rick Perry and his appointees to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, have expressed skepticism about the science linking climate change and carbon emissions and are fighting federal efforts to force industrial facilities to curb emissions.

Salazar said he expected vigorous discussion about how to deal with climate change, but he told reporters there was no point in talking about whether it's happening.

"I think the debate about whether or not climate change is occurring is a debate that is over," Salazar said. "I think the scientific community is unanimous in its opinion that we are seeing climate change upon us. We would be foolhardy not to move forward and to address the impacts of climate change."

Lighten and brighten your laundry's load

By TERRI BENNETT
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

DO YOUR PART

Washing clothes is more than just a chore; it also takes quite a toll on the environment. The good news is that there are easy and effective ways to Do Your Part to conserve water and create less pollution even while you do the laundry.

Laura F. e-mailed me about a good bleach alternative for laundry. She's already using a green detergent but needed a "good whitener."

Let me start by saying that I too have limited the use of bleach in my home. For laundry I've switched to a bleach alternative that uses oxygen to enhance the cleaning power of my eco-friendly detergent. For whites you can also use a cup of hydrogen peroxide to your full load of whites. Another option is to pre-soak your whites in a solution of 1 part white vinegar and 6 parts warm water. Let it sit overnight and then wash your clothes as normal. Don't worry about smelling like a salad, the smell of vinegar disappears when it dries.

When it comes to laundry detergent it's important to choose one that's phosphate free. When excess phosphates enter the water supply it acts as a super-charged fertilizer for algae.

The resulting algae bloom depletes the available oxygen, choking the life out of the surrounding aquatic habitat. It's also a good idea to seek out vegetable-based detergents like Seventh Generation, Method, and even Martha Stewart.

Many of the conventional laundry detergents are petroleum based which means they are made in part from crude oil.

MCT
Doing the laundry can be made more environmentally friendly by using an alternative to bleach and a phosphate-free detergent.

If you're looking for a greener fabric softener, I've got a dirt-cheap solution for you. Simply add 1/4 cup of white vinegar to the rinse cycle or the fabric softener dispenser. It's absolutely non-toxic and your clothes will come out of the dryer softer because vinegar's acidic properties help dissolve any soap residue left on your clothing. This is also a great solution for anyone that suffers from laundry detergent allergies.

And don't forget the basics. Don't use more detergent than you need. Wash only full loads of laundry and with cold water. Making the switch to the cold cycle will save about $60 a year on your power bill because you'll be giving the hot water heater a break.

Finally, when it comes time to replace your old washing machine, make sure to buy one with the government's Energy Star rating. These models use the least amount of water and energy and there are a number of rebates available this year.

Laundry day doesn't have to be a day to dread. Instead, Do Your Part to clean up your laundry routine and you'll feel better about the whole dirty business!

Memorial Eucharist Service

Beatrice Borja Peredo Troup

Familian Dasu

All family and friends are cordially invited to attend a Memorial Eucharist Service to celebrate her life.

The service will be held on Saturday, March 20th at 9:00am at the Saipan Community Church in Susupe.

Daughter of †Angelina Borja Peredo and †Jesus Taitano Pinuala

Survived by:

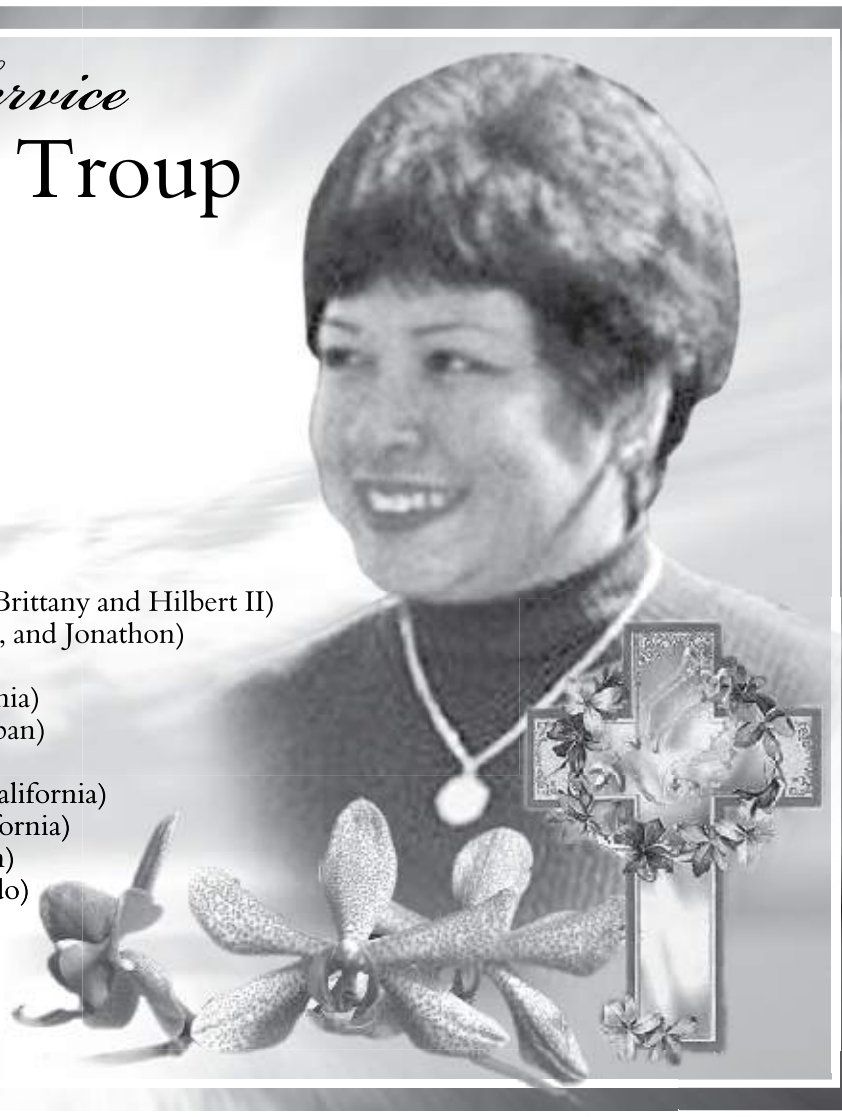
Her Husband: Mike Troup

Their Children and Spouses: Cirela and Jose Villagomez (Max)
Sonia And Hilbert San Nicholas (Brittany and Hilbert II)
Ken Taitano (Joe Brandon, Bianca, and Jonathon)
William Troup

Her brothers and sisters: Ana and Vic Vergerra (Pennysylvania)
Susana Rios and Mike Tokyo (Saipan)
Rosa Rios (Saipan)
Armando and Sarah Villafuerte (California)
Julius and Bessie Villafuerte (California)
Chris and Mely Villafuerte (Saipan)
Dorothy and Dana Kurtz (Colorado)

Special Friends: Antonio Aguon
Vic Dukor

Thank you and Si Yuus Maase
Mike Troup and Family



Life & Style

'The Pacific,' premiering Sunday on HBO

By Robert Lloyd
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—It was inevitable after the popular and critical success of their 2001 World War II miniseries "Band of Brothers," which told the story of the drive to conquer Hitler and Mussolini, that executive producers Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg would return to finish the job. "The Pacific," which tells the story of the war against Japan, is here—it begins Sunday on HBO—and is its forerunner's equal in emotive strength, weird poetry and technical bravura; it is also, if memory of the first series serves, an even more brutal and unnerving experience, appropriate to a war fought in tropical extremes against an enemy for whom surrender was not an option.

I'll say now, before I get down to picking its nits—it has a few, and most might be predicted from the Spielberg oeuvre—that it's a splendid production, absolutely worth watching in its 10-hour entirety. It is full of remarkable things, from the measured, modulated performances of its large cast of stars and supporting players—universally excellent and life-sized, even when a speech or moment invites overplaying—to the clamorous staging and brilliant editing of the battle scenes, so awash in chaos, so seemingly random in their progress, that it's difficult to work out how any of it was accomplished.

There is perhaps too much of the stuttering shutter-speed effect, familiar from "Saving Private Ryan," that has come to stand for action too quick to comprehend, but it does its job.

And while I object in general to slow-motion death scenes—it is especially jarring in a film that strives so mightily for veracity—the series' one instance does merit the effect.

Based largely on two first-person accounts—"Helmet for My Pillow" by Robert Leckie (played here by James Badge Dale) and "With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa" by Eugene Sledge (Joseph Mazzello), with Medal of Honor-winner John Basilone (Jon Seda) as the third dramatic anchor—the series presents only a slice of the war, following the 1st Marine Division through battles on Guadalcanal, Peleliu, Okinawa, Cape Gloucester and, briefly, Iwo Jima; for tonal variation and audience relief, there are also excursions to Melbourne, Australia, for R&R, and back to America, as Basilone is sent around the country selling war bonds.

The series begins with a stateside preamble, and ends with an episode set entirely after the war, as the survivors attempt to come back into the world.

As to the progress of the war, almost nothing is explained; we get only a glimpse at a map to show us where we are. (The why is not always so clear, past taking whatever piece of rock the Marines find themselves upon.) We are at war, and in war; the view is almost entirely that of enlisted men and noncommissioned officers, and extends no farther than they can see themselves. The rest of the world is nothing but a dream. (The dropping of the atomic bomb is presented as just another passing rumor.) Although we are given plenty of emotional information about our main characters, the series is less a narrative than a kind of tone poem, alternating moments of dark and light, quiet and loud, action and rest.

The limited point of view also means that, as in "Band of Brothers," the enemy is a remote, mostly dehumanized presence—or a charging, immediate one that the complicit viewer is only too happy to see shot down, blown up or stabbed clean through. There is some attention paid to keep things on the near side of racism—the Japanese soldier, Basilone tells a platoon of eager recruits, is not "a bucktooth cartoon dreamed up by some (expletive deleted) on Madison Avenue to sell soap," and every so often we're allowed to feel their pain. Just so, there are scenes of American soldiers acting less than what we usually like to think of as human.

"Next war," says one character, "there's going to be two men missing, me and the MP they send after me." Because it is so graphically violent, it is by nature an anti-war movie, and not a "patriotic" one, even as it is intently pro-soldier, sailor and Marine.

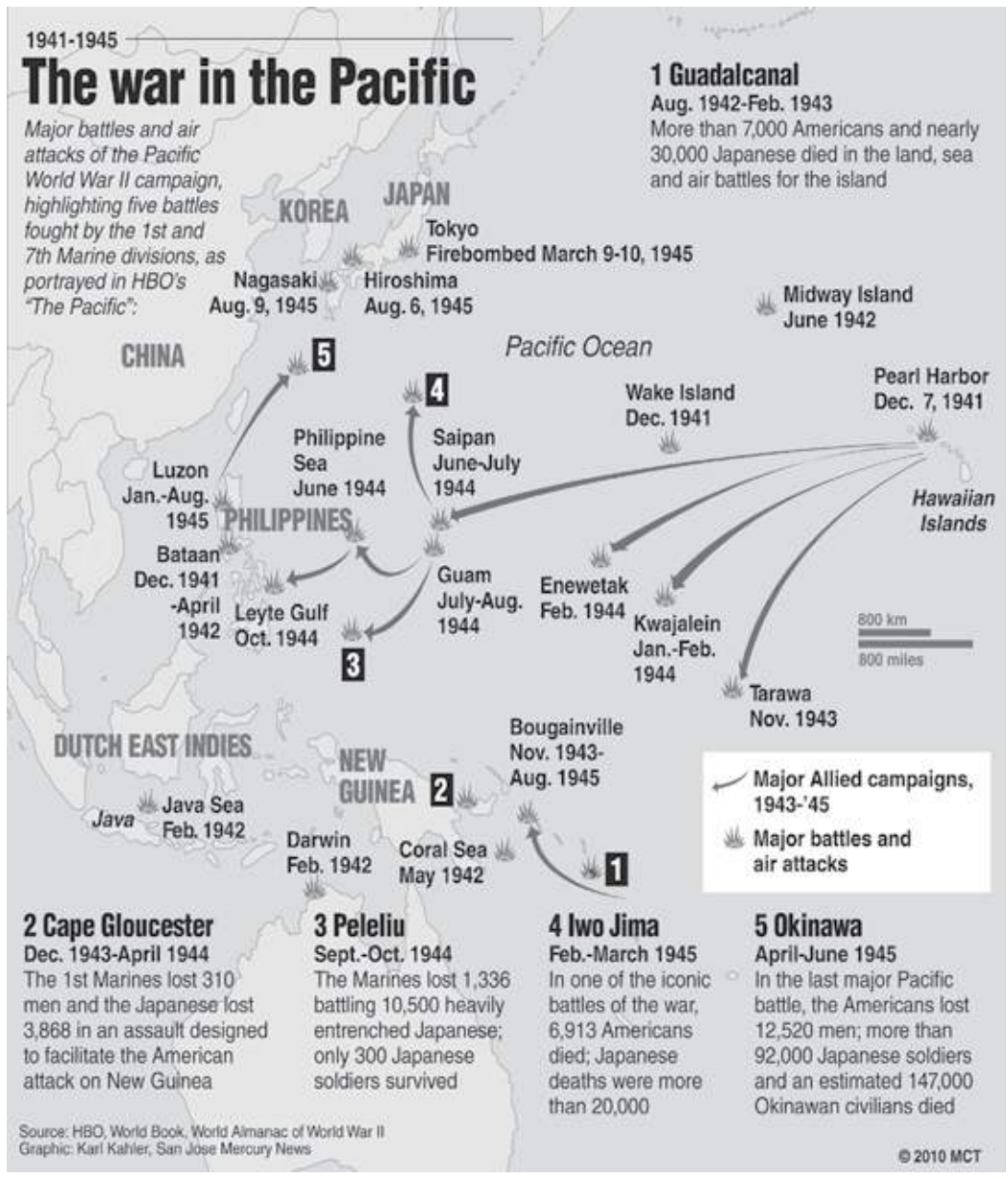
And it is most certainly a movie—a Hollywood creation put together by screenwriters, casting directors, cinematographers, directors, decorators, lighting technicians, makeup artists. Here and there it edges near some old war-movie cliche—the ironic death, the ravaged soul redeemed—though it does not linger there long.

But even as it makes death vivid—and the dead here do not look like waxworks—it cheats as often, as most every movie does, in favor of what's pretty and living: The men are all handsome, the women are all pretty, and even the ruins of earth and men may be beautifully shot and composed.

Slow strings pointlessly underscore most every scene over which we are meant to reflect or to feel sad (and as in all Spielberg productions, scenes of "home" are bathed in immaculate, soft light).

There is a sliver of romance that ineluctably works in between the original thing and its filmic portrayal—indeed, the filmmakers have found room for love scenes, including a suggestion of "From Here to Eternity," and for sex scenes—just as there are depths that even the best-equipped, best-funded band of movie people cannot plumb or re-create, only suggest.

As one character says of the Grand Canyon, in dialogue that seems calculated to reflect upon the enterprise at hand, "Pictures don't show it. You have to be there, looking down into it."



Julia Child letters coming this fall

NEW YORK (AP) — The Julia Child renaissance continues.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt announced Tuesday that it will publish "As Always, Julia," more than 200 letters between the beloved chef and her agent Avis DeVoto, in December. The letters were written between 1952 and 1966, when Child rose from being a little known American living in Paris to becoming a co-author of the seminal "Mastering the Art of French Cooking" and host of the "The French Chef" television program.

Child died in 2004, just before her 92nd birthday, and was played by Meryl Streep in the recent hit film "Julie & Julia." Millions of copies of her books have sold since the movie came out.

In Celebration of Her New Life

MARGARITA ATALIG CASTRO

Date of Birth: June 10, 1950
Died: March 15, 2010

Husband: Joaquin Quichocho Castro
Children: Xavier A. Castro/Williemae D. Castro (Maiana; Samaya; Lorenzo)
Deanna C. Sablan/Philip G. Sablan (Jordan; Reece; Nathaniel)
Dionne A. Castro (Kiara)
Donnalynn A. Castro/Joseph T. Camacho (Tori; Ava)
Christopher A. Castro
Father: †Andres Camacho Atalig
Mother: †Maria Manglona Atalig
Brothers: †Antonio M. & Florence Atalig & family
David M. & Corazon Atalig & family
Sisters: Angelina A. & Jim Hiyane & family
Rosa A. & Ray Jasper & family
Fermina A. & Jesse Castro & family
Esther A. & Mike Ross & family
Alice A. & John Mereb & family
Father-in-law: †Segundo DLC Castro
Mother-in-law: Virginia Quichocho Castro
Brothers-in-law: Jesus Q. Castro, Gregorio Q. Castro & family, Jose Q. & Connie Castro & family, Alfredo Q. & Margarita Castro & family, Jun Q. & Celina Castro & family, Lee Q. & Cherry Castro & family, Kevin Q. Castro
Sisters-in-law: Anicia C. & Jess Sonoda & family, Lillian C. & Bruce Blanton & family, Magdalena C. & Ray Taitano & family, Rosalyn C. & Jesse Quintanilla & family, Celina C. & Richard Farrel & family
Special Friends: †Robert S. Calvo, Jr. and kids

Additionally survived by numerous aunties, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, godsons, and goddaughters.

Mass on Saipan is held at St. Jude Church at Koblerville at 6:00 P.M., Saturday at 7:00 AM, and Sunday at 8:00 AM. Mass on Rota is being held at San Isidro Church, at Sinapalo, at 7:00 PM, and 8:00 AM on Sunday. On Monday, March 22, on Saipan, viewing will be offered at Borja Funeral Home from 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM. Thereafter, the remains will be flown to Rota. On Tuesday, March 23, at Rota, viewing of the remains will be between 7:00AM to 10:00 AM, at San Francisco de Borja Church, in Songsong Village. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30 AM followed by the burial.

The family of the late Margarita Atalig Castro wish to express a sincere Thank You, Si Yuus Ma'ase, and Maraming Salamat for all your thoughts and prayers.

Jessica Simpson investigates standards of beauty

NEW YORK (AP)—Singer and sometimes actress Jessica Simpson has paid the price of beauty, and now she's examining people's obsession with looking good.

She made headlines last year when photos of her performing suggested she might have gained a few pounds. That sparked a national debate on TV news channels, talk shows and in print asking if Simpson was, indeed, fat.

The 29-year-old has decided to turn the tables on questions about how she looked. The result is a new show called, "Jessica Simpson's The Price of Beauty." The show premiered Monday and will air weekly on VH1.

Simpson travels the globe with two friends, hair stylist Ken Paves and former assistant Cacee Cobb, to examine people's efforts to measure up to their society's standard of beauty.

The goal is to empower women to accept themselves and ultimately understand that no one, not even celebrities, are perfect.

Paves points out that despite the scrutiny on her weight, Simpson continued performing and doing her job.

"Imagine if the whole world is talking about you," Paves said. "She still followed through, never stopped and nobody ever said, 'That's a strong girl, that's a brave girl.' I was disappointed."

It wasn't always easy, Simpson said.

"You can't walk anywhere without thinking, 'I wonder if they think I'm fat .... I wonder if they've read that story," Simpson said. "I couldn't help it. And I think that once I realized it wasn't going to stop, I had to find a way to accept it, and I had to find a way to use it."

On "Price of Beauty," Simpson and her friends meet a woman in Thailand who burned herself permanently from bleaching her skin lighter. They talk with a former Paris model who starved herself to under 100 pounds to be thin.

Viewers witness a deeper side to Simpson than they saw on her former MTV reality show "Newlyweds" with then-husband Nick Lachey.

"I'm very vulnerable on the show. I'm very open. I don't have anything to hide," Simpson said. "I want people to know I am just a normal girl that faces normal issues just like everyone else."

But the show is not all life lessons and sadness. There are lighter moments, too, when Simpson and her pals try to immerse themselves in local culture.

AP

Jessica Simpson arrives at the Vanity Fair Oscar party on Sunday, March 7, 2010, in West Hollywood, Calif.

"In Mumbai, we drank cow urine because it detoxes you and it's good for your skin," Simpson said. "I puked that up like all over the place."

Paves got a Brazilian wax when the three visited Brazil.

"I was screaming, cussing, kicking," he said. "I was in tears, red and raw, I couldn't walk."

Simpson said she's taking a break from music now to focus on the show, which she hopes will get picked up for another season. Next, she plans to start a foundation for girls to help with self-esteem. She wants to empower young women to accept themselves and ultimately understand that no one, not even celebrities, are perfect.

"I don't look like the girl on the cover of the magazine," Simpson said. "I do not look like my covers. My covers! They airbrush me."

Rolling Stones tunes supply 'Idol' surprises

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tim Urban couldn't get any satisfaction on "American Idol."

The judges dismissed Urban's reggae rendition of "Under My Thumb" during a night of Rolling Stones tunes in the Fox singing competition's first round of finals Tuesday. "Idol" judge Randy Jackson dubbed the 20-year-old college student's take on the 1966 classic "weird," and Simon Cowell affirmed it was a "crazy decision." Urban shrugged off their criticism.

"I tried to make it my own," he attested over howls from the audience.

The panel was most impressed with Siobhan Magnus' theatrical interpretation of "Paint It Black," which concluded with the 20-year-old glass blower wailing into the microphone.

Jackson called Magnus' approach "hot," while Cowell proclaimed it was the "standout performance of the night." Kara DioGuardi said it reminded her of Adam Lambert, last season's runner-up.

"You rise above," Ellen DeGeneres told Magnus.

Singers who were bashed by the judges during semifinals seemingly surprised the panel with their respectable renditions of Stones songs. Among them: 17-year-old high school student Katie Stevens with "Wild Horses," 23-year-old waitress Didi Benami with "Play With Fire," and 16-year-old high school student Aaron Kelly with "Angie."

"I beat you up good last week, but you showed me tonight," DioGuardi told Kelly.

Paige Miles overcame laryngitis to croon "Honky Tonk Woman," which earned the judges' praise. Jackson and Cowell were shocked to learn the 24-year-old preschool teacher was ill, while DeGeneres and DioGuardi lauded the struggling Miles for commanding the stage. Miles told host Ryan Seacrest it was the first time she sang the song "full out."

"I haven't really rehearsed," she said.

Casey James and Lee Dewyze accompanied themselves with their respective guitars on bluesy editions of "It's All Over Now" and "Beast Of Burden." DioGuardi called James, 27, a "rock star." But Dewyze wasn't as lucky. Cowell said the shy 23-year-old paint-sales clerk needs to "come on this stage and have a moment."

Winfrey due in Philly for 2-week defamation trial

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Media mogul Oprah Winfrey is expected to spend two weeks defending herself at trial in a defamation case linked to the sex-abuse scandal at her girls school in South Africa.

A federal judge this week refused to dismiss the suit filed by Winfrey's ex-headmistress, paving the way for a March 29 trial in Philadelphia.

The billionaire talk show host, as a named defendant, must be in court and has rearranged her TV production schedule to do so, her lawyers said in a recent court filing. She also appears likely to be called as a witness.

Winfrey

After the abuse complaints surfaced in 2007, Winfrey said she had "lost confidence" in headmistress Nomvuyo Mzamane and was "cleaning house from top to bottom."

A dorm matron who worked under Mzamane was later charged in South Africa with abusing six students. The judge found that Winfrey made both Mzamane and the dorm parents appear "culpable" by telling parents, "I'm going to find a new head of the academy for the school. ... Dorm parents are gone, (Mzamane) is gone."

The statement suggests Mzamane had a role in the mistreatment of the students, "which clearly would tend to 'blacken' plaintiff's reputation or injure her in her profession," U.S. District Judge Eduardo Robreno wrote in a 128-page opinion issued Monday.

Winfrey was in South Africa on Tuesday visiting the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls, near Johannesburg, according to her production company, Harpo Productions. She opened the $40 million school for impoverished girls amid great fanfare in January 2007 and recruited Mzamane, a Lesotho native, from a private school in Philadelphia.

Winfrey's lawyers sought to dismiss the suit on grounds the remarks she made at an Oct. 20, 2007 meeting with parents and at a Nov. 5, 2007 press conference reflected only her opinions.

But Robreno said a listener could infer she based the comments on facts gleaned from the school's internal investigation.

Winfrey herself acknowledged the power of her words when she said in a deposition that she thought only two people—President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle—wield more influence in the media, Mzamane's lawyers said in a brief.

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Remember Me

Friday		4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Mon thru Thurs		4:00	7:00	

Robert Pattinson, Emilie de Ravin
Drama • Rated PG 13

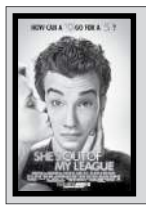
Synopsis
In the romantic drama Remember Me, Robert Pattinson plays Tyler, a rebellious young man in New York City who has a strained relationship with his father (Pierce Brosnan) ever since tragedy separated their family. Tyler didn't think anyone could possibly understand what he was going through until the day he met Ally (Emilie de Ravin) through an unusual twist of fate. Love was the last thing on his mind, but as her spirit unexpectedly heals and inspires him, he begins to fall for her. Through their love, he begins to find happiness and meaning in his life.

The Green Zone

Friday		4:30	7:25	9:50
Saturday	1:10	4:30	7:25	9:50
Sunday	1:10	4:30	7:25	
Mon thru Thurs		4:30	7:25	

Matt Damon, Greg Kinnear
Drama • Rated R

Synopsis
United 93 director Paul Greengrass explores the aftermath of the Iraq invasion in this feature adaptation of author Rajiv Chandrasekaran's literary exposé of the same name. A one-time Baghdad bureau chief of the Washington Post, Chandrasekaran was present as American forces attempted to set up a provisional government on the grounds surrounding former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's opulent palace. The resulting governing body, according to critics, existed in a bubble so far removed from the grim realities of the Iraq War that it failed to properly assess the needs of the people.



She's Out Of My League

Friday		4:20	7:10	9:40
Saturday	1:30	4:20	7:10	9:40
Sunday	1:30	4:20	7:10	
Mon thru Thurs		4:20	7:10	

Jay Baruchel, Alice Eve
Comedy • Rated R

Paano Na Kaya

Friday		4:10	7:30	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:10	7:30	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:10	7:30	
Mon thru Thurs		4:10	7:30	

Kim Chiu, Gerald Anderson
Romance • Rated NR

Alice in Wonderland

Friday		4:15	7:15	9:30
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:15	9:30
Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:15	
Mon thru Thurs		4:15	7:15	

Johnny Depp, Anne Hathaway
Fantasy • Rated PG

Dear John

Friday		4:05	7:05	9:55
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:55
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Mon thru Thurs		4:05	7:05	

Channing Tatum, Amanda Seyfried
Drama • Rated PG 13

Shutter Island

Friday				9:45
Saturday				9:45
Sunday				
Mon thru Thurs				

Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Ruffalo
Thriller • Rated R

Cop Out

Friday		4:25	7:20	
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:20	
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:20	
Mon thru Thurs		4:25	7:20	

Bruce Willis, Tracy Morgan
Comedy • Rated R

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Warrant issued for Lil Wayne in Arizona case

YUMA, Ariz. (AP)—An Arizona judge issued a bench warrant Tuesday for Grammy Award-winning rapper Lil Wayne after he failed to appear for a hearing on drug and weapons charges because he is serving jail time in New York.

A Yuma County Superior Court judge issued the warrant after the entertainer, whose real name is Dwayne Carter, failed to appear in court for a final trial management conference.

But Lil Wayne's attorney, James Tilson, said his client couldn't appear because he is already serving a one-year jail sentence for having a loaded gun on his tour bus. The rapper began serving that sentence March 8 at the Rikers Island jail complex.

Lil Wayne was arrested in January 2008 at a border checkpoint 78 miles east of Yuma after authorities say they found cocaine, Ecstasy and a handgun on his tour bus.

The 27-year-old rap star has been charged with one count each of possession of a narcotic drug for sale, possession of dangerous drugs, misconduct involving weapons and one count of possession of drug paraphernalia. He has plead not guilty to all the charges.

Tilson said he has filed motions to have Lil Wayne's March 30 trial date vacated, and asked the court that his client be allowed to appear in Yuma when he finishes his New York jail sentence. He also has asked that his bond remain the same.

"It does not appear that a trial will be occurring anytime within the next eight to 12 months," Tilson said.

But Yuma County prosecutor Deann Sandry said it was the state's position that Lil Wayne is now a convicted felon and that a bench warrant should be issued and his bond be increased to $150,000.

Charlie Sheen back at work on 'Two and a Half Men'

NEW YORK (AP)—Charlie Sheen is back at work and shooting has resumed on "Two and a Half Men."

His agent, Stan Rosenfield, says Sheen returned to the Warner Bros. set in Burbank, Calif., on Tuesday morning.

The 44-year-old actor voluntarily entered a rehab facility "as a preventative measure" that temporarily halted production of CBS' top-rated sitcom last month.

Sheen still faces legal problems arising from a fight with his wife in Aspen, Colo., in December. He is charged with assault, criminal mischief and menacing, which carries a possible sentence of one to three years in prison.

Sheen pleaded not guilty to domestic violence charges in Colorado's Pitkin County District Court on Monday. A judge scheduled a jury trial for July 21.

AP

Actor Charlie Sheen enters Pitkin County Courthouse in Aspen, Colo., on Monday, March 15, 2010, to attend a hearing on domestic violence charges stemming from a Christmas Day dispute with his wife.

'Avatar' to be released on DVD, not IN 3-D

NEW YORK (AP)—"Avatar" is coming to DVD, but not yet in 3-D.

Twentieth Century Fox announced Tuesday that James Cameron's sci-fi epic will be released on Blu-ray and regular DVD on April 22. The studio noted that the release date coincides with the 40th anniversary of Earth Day.

No announcement was made regarding a 3-D DVD release, but a Fox spokesman said one can be expected in the future. The market for 3-D home video is still in the nascent stages, though TVs equipped for 3-D are increasingly being produced.

The DVDs won't include special features. Producer Jon Landau said in a statement that the lack of extras was done to improve picture and sound quality.

The announcement comes while "Avatar," which won three Oscars, remains in the top-10 at the box office. It has earned more than $730 million domestically.

'Toy Story' creator Pixar earns theater award

LAS VEGAS (AP)—The makers of "Up," "WALL-E" and other Academy Award-winning cartoons have taken home a new prize.

Disney-owned Pixar Animation received the ShoWest Big Ten Award on Tuesday in honor of the company's perfect track record—10 films, 10 blockbuster hits, including "Finding Nemo" and "The Incredibles."

John Lasseter, Pixar's creative mastermind and director of "Toy Story" and "Toy Story 2," accepted the award just before screening the franchise's sequel, "Toy Story 3," for the audience at ShoWest, an annual convention of theater owners.

Lasseter thanked theater owners for supporting Pixar from the start and promised that "we will keep delivering great movies. We're not stopping at 10."

"Toy Story 3" opens in theaters June 18.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Expect huge TV audiences for Woods' Masters return

NEW YORK (AP)—CBS Sports' president thinks that Tiger Woods' return to golf will be one of the "biggest media spectacles in recent memory." Sean McManus told The Associated Press last week before Woods announced when he would play again that he believed only President Barack Obama's inauguration would rank higher as a media event. CBS will get to televise the spectacle now that Woods has said he will come back at next month's Masters. Huge numbers of viewers will undoubtedly tune in to see how Woods plays following a four-month break from golf brought on by revelations of his infidelity. ESPN airs the first two rounds of the Masters before CBS takes over for the weekend.

Virgin America apologizes for LA-to-NY grounding

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Virgin America has offered refunds to "Dancing With the Stars" judge Carrie Ann Inaba and other passengers who were stranded for hours on a grounded plane bound for New York from Los Angeles. Virgin America CEO David Cush sent an apology letter Tuesday to each passenger, promised refunds and provided credit for a future flight. Flight 404 left Los Angeles International Airport on Saturday, but fierce winds forced it to land at Stewart Airport in Newburgh, about 90 miles north of New York. The airline says people were kept on the ground for 4 1/2 hours—although they were allowed to leave the plane—then bused to New York's JFK Airport.

Rapper DMX ordered to 6 months in Phoenix jail

PHOENIX (AP)—A judge has ordered rapper DMX to spend six months in a Phoenix jail for violating probation and to undergo a mental health evaluation. DMX, whose real name is Earl Simmons, admitted in court Tuesday to a single violation of probation for failing a drug test last June. He was arrested March 9. The 39-year-old rapper was released from jail in May after serving a 90-day sentence for felony convictions including cruelty to animals, theft and two drug counts. Maricopa County Superior Court Commissioner Christine Mulleneaux says he could be released from jail earlier if he's accepted into a drug rehabilitation program. County authorities have arrested Simmons five times, including an August 2007 raid on the rapper's north Phoenix home where they found 12 neglected dogs, three buried dogs, drugs and a cache of weapons.

Dixie Chicks to tour with Keith Urban, the Eagles

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — All three members of the Dixie Chicks, including lead singer Natalie Maines, are heading out in June on a one-month stadium tour with The Eagles and Keith Urban. This marks the first time in four years that the Chicks will take the stage on tour together. Their first show with The Eagles kicks off in Toronto on June 8. Urban joins both acts two nights later in East Rutherford, New Jersey. They all will continue on to Boston, Philadelphia, Washington and Chicago, with the last two dates — June 22 in Winnipeg, Canada, and June 24 in St. Louis — featuring only the Chicks and The Eagles. Tickets go on sale to the general public on March 29. The Dixie Chicks haven't released any new music since their Grammy-winning 2006 album, "Taking the Long Way."

Loved ones' final wishes honor unique individuals

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I'm writing to encourage "Wants to Do Right by Mama" (Jan. 25) to honor her mother's final wishes regarding her burial attire and the position of her body. Several years ago, I sat down with my parents and we talked about their wishes for when they die. We discussed everything from the distribution of their assets to the type of funerals they want. I learned that my father would like a large tombstone, which is something I never knew, so I asked him to draw up exactly what he had in mind.

Mom and Dad have already written their obituaries for the newspaper. Mom listed all the songs to be played at her service and the flowers she wants. We visited funeral homes, and discussed coffins and services, etc. Since then, they have changed their minds several times and have now decided they prefer cremation. Everything is written down and I sent copies to my brother, who lives out of town. Both of us want to respect our parents' wishes.

It wasn't as difficult as we thought it would be, and when the time comes and everyone is emotionally spent, the arrangements will already be in place.

JIM IN CHESTERFIELD, MO.

DEAR JIM: I congratulate you for having that important discussion with your parents. A number of readers commented on that letter. Their remarks made me smile, so I'll share. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: My father wanted to be buried without any clothes on and without his dentures. His reasoning was he came into the world naked and toothless, and he wanted to go out the same way. To my brother's dismay, Daddy got his wish. He was, however, covered discreetly by a lovely blue sheet.

MISSING DADDY

DEAR ABBY: My children know for a fact that if I'm ever unable to care for myself, they'll have to pluck out my chin hairs. Whether I'm in a nursing home or in a coffin, if there are any coarse hairs sprouting from my chin, I'll come back and haunt them.

MARTHA IN GREEN BAY

DEAR ABBY: When we buried my mother, Dad realized his burial plot next to hers would be so close to the road that visitors might drive over it or park on his grave. So he requested that when he was interred, a nail be placed in his fist so he could reach up and pop their tires. When he passed away last August, we gave him the largest nail we could find.

DADDY'S DAUGHTER

DEAR ABBY: Our mother saved her favorite square dancing outfit for when the angels called her, and we honored her wishes when she passed away a few months ago at the age of 89. She was completely decked out in her dress, right down to the "full" slip, shoes and six-shooter earrings. We miss her terribly, but can't help smiling when we think of her in her dress.

DID RIGHT BY MAMA, OTHELLO, WASH.

DEAR ABBY: My great-grandma also requested that she be buried in her pajamas, but said she also wanted a fork placed in her hands. We could understand the pajamas—given the "long sleep"—but the fork had us stumped. She explained that when dishes were cleared after family dinners when she was growing up and dessert was on its way, her father would say, "Hold onto your fork, the best is yet to come!"

We did as my great-grandmother asked, and it helped those of us who were grieving to remember that she's now enjoying her "just desserts."

HOLDING TIGHT TO MY FORK, SIOUX FALLS, S.D.

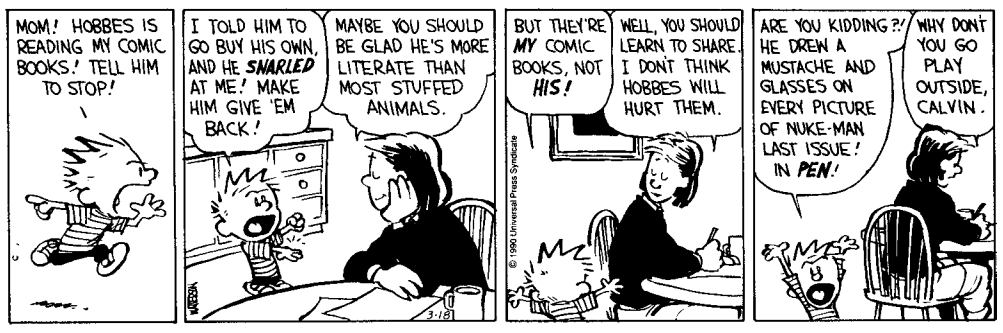
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


MOM! HOBBES IS READING MY COMIC BOOKS! TELL HIM TO STOP!
I TOLD HIM TO GO BUY HIS OWN, AND HE SNARLED AT ME! MAKE HIM GIVE 'EM BACK!
MAYBE YOU SHOULD BE GLAD HE'S MORE LITERATE THAN MOST STUFFED ANIMALS.
BUT THEY'RE MY COMIC BOOKS, NOT HIS!
WELL, YOU SHOULD LEARN TO SHARE. I DON'T THINK HOBBES WILL HURT THEM.
ARE YOU KIDDING?! HE DREW A MUSTACHE AND GLASSES ON EVERY PICTURE OF NUKE-MAN LAST ISSUE! IN PEN!
WHY DON'T YOU GO PLAY OUTSIDE, CALVIN.
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By Jim Davis

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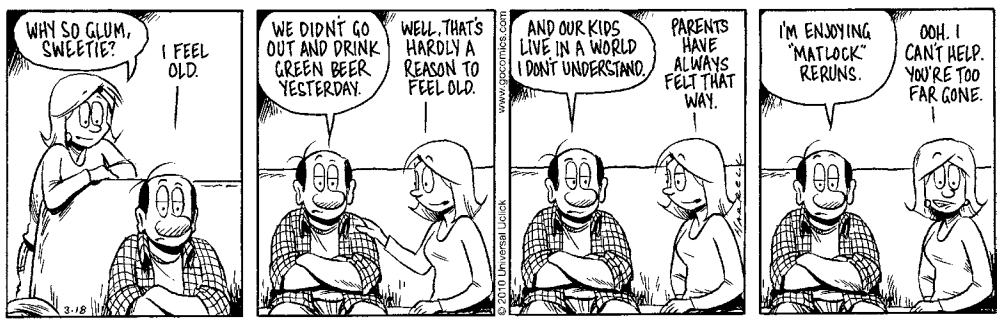
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


WHY SO GLUM, SWEETIE?
I FEEL OLD.
WE DIDN'T GO OUT AND DRINK GREEN BEER YESTERDAY.
WELL, THAT'S HARDLY A REASON TO FEEL OLD.
AND OUR KIDS LIVE IN A WORLD I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
PARENTS HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT WAY.
I'M ENJOYING "MATLOCK" RERUNS.
OOH. I CAN'T HELP. YOU'RE TOO FAR GONE.
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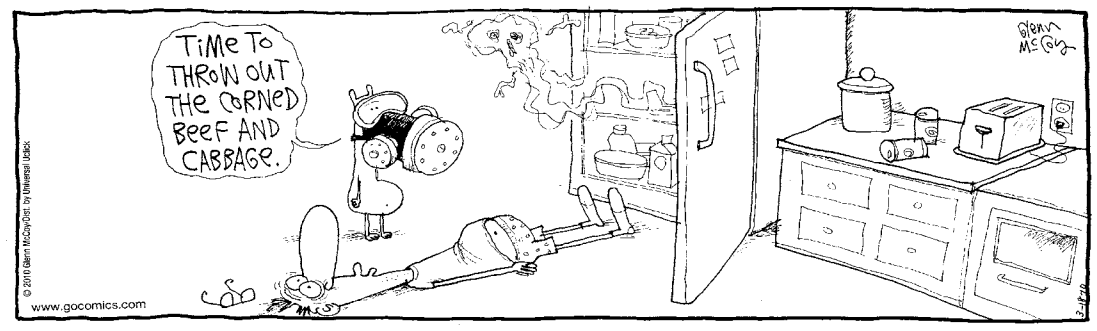
The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

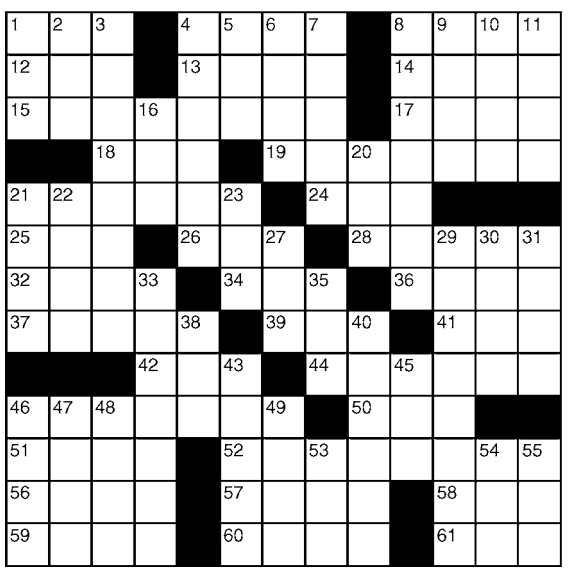
ACROSS
1 Donkey
4 Difficult
8 Clenched hand
12 Cudgel
13 Hodge-podge
14 Formerly
15 Green onion
17 Stench
18 Began
19 Starting at the highest level
21 Diversion
24 Uncooked
25 Here (French)
26 Aries
28 Family branches
32 Fax cover-page word
34 Post-proof abbr.
36 Cry loudly
37 Melodies
39 Grumpy companion?
41 By way of
42 Hiatus
44 Suitor's intent
46 Annual publication
50 Zilch
51 Worms, maybe
52 Bundle of nerves?
56 Wheels of fortune?
57 Duel tool
58 Mine-car contents
59 Paradise
60 Entrance
61 Promptly

DOWN
1 Tummy muscles
2 Pouch
3 Mare's mate
4 Attorney General Eric
5 Foreman foe
6 Laugh-a-minute
7 Recipient's benefactor
8 Network of predatory relationships
9 — -European
10 Garbage barge
11 Sea bird
16 Mainlander's memento
20 — de deux
21 Fissure
22 Beige
23 Online help page
27 Club —
29 Tent at an expo
30 Look-alike
31 Refinery waste
33 Explosive measure
35 Wall Street stat, with "The"
38 — Rafael
40 Eel type
43 Summoned on a beeper
45 Lubricant
46 Competent
47 Positioned
48 Marceau, e.g.
49 Guitar attachment
53 Ultra-modern (Prefix)
54 Acapulco gold
55 Fresh

Solution time: 25 mins.

S	H	Y	■	J	U	N	G	■	H	A	V	E
Y	E	A	■	A	F	A	R	■	A	G	A	R
N	I	L	■	C	O	M	E	A	L	O	N	G
C	R	E	E	K	■	■	W	I	T	■	■	■
■	■	■	P	A	L	S	■	D	E	C	A	F
H	O	P	A	L	O	N	G	■	R	A	G	A
U	S	E	■	S	T	E	A	D	■	P	I	N
S	L	E	W	■	T	A	G	A	L	O	N	G
K	O	R	E	A	■	D	A	M	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	D	N	A	■	■	A	D	O	P	T
S	I	N	G	A	L	O	N	G	■	N	O	R
T	R	E	E	■	S	L	O	E	■	C	O	O
Y	A	W	S	■	O	D	D	S	■	E	L	Y

Yesterday's answer 3-18



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Adam Levine, 31; Dane Cook, 38; Queen Latifah, 40; Vanessa Williams, 47

Happy Birthday: Don't let anyone stand in your way or limit what you can do or say. Do what's best for yourself, without hesitation. A partnership must be evened out or left behind. Speak from the heart but don't hold back how you feel. It's time for you to put yourself first. Your numbers are 4, 15, 19, 23, 26, 37, 40

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): You will be sensitive and will react quickly to the way people treat you. The changes or reforms you want to make will be met with opposition. The way you go about things will set the stage for what's to come. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Explain your situation without giving away too much information. You may be asked to make a few changes but, if you are willing to compromise, you will reach an agreement that benefits everyone involved. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Put your Gemini charm to work and you can influence the outcome of a situation you face. Don't let someone's disgruntled response stop you from moving forward. A relationship with the potential to grow will sprout if you offer your services to a community group. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Keep your thoughts to yourself, especially if they could cause friction with someone at work or at home. Your reputation may be at risk if you meddle or spread rumors. An older friend or relative may need help. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You'll be where the action is and can entice people to support your ideas and plans. Travel, intrigue and romance are all in the stars. Don't be afraid to make demands and lay down some ground rules that position you well for the future. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Hold off making a decision if you feel someone is trying to railroad you into something that may not be good for you. Financial loss and additional burdens resulting from a mistake made long ago will actually lead to solutions. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Focus on what you can gain in the shortest period of time. If someone tries to influence you or push you to do something you don't want to do, stick up for your rights and get back to your own projects and plans. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): A move or investment will give you a much-needed boost. Now is not the time to beat around the bush—say what's on your mind, clear the air and make your move. Procrastination will be your enemy. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*) Don't allow relatives and neighbors to bring you down or cause you grief. If you remain neutral, refusing to take part in an ugly discussion, you will come out unscathed. Problems while traveling can be expected. ✪✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Do not give in, back down or ignore issues that must be dealt with. It may not be the nicest situation to be in but, if you use past experiences as an example, you will convince people you are dealing with to give you a chance. Your skills will leave a good impression. ✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): It may be time to question your current direction. Don't let depression set in when all that's required is a couple of changes on your part. You have added discipline and you should be putting it to good use. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Impulsive acts and overspending will create a difficult situation. Before you do something you'll regret, turn your attention to something productive and industrious. The choice is yours, so settle down and get to work. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are a thinker, a planner and a responsible person. You are sensitive and caring but you lack patience.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	5	9		2		4		
8			1					
4						8		3
	1			4				
9			5		8			4
				7			3	
5		6						8
					7			2
		1		3		6	9	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/18

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

8	7	9	3	2	5	1	6	4
5	6	3	1	9	4	2	8	7
4	2	1	7	6	8	3	5	9
1	9	4	5	3	2	6	7	8
6	3	2	4	8	7	5	9	1
7	5	8	9	1	6	4	2	3
2	4	5	8	7	3	9	1	6
9	8	6	2	4	1	7	3	5
3	1	7	6	5	9	8	4	2

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/17

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

THE GREEN PARTY **Solution: 10 letters**

S	E	G	R	Y	G	O	L	O	C	Ⓔ	Ⓒ	Ⓐ	Ⓔ	Ⓟ
Y	E	C	A	M	S	I	V	I	T	C	A	S	E	A
T	A	V	R	O	T	S	I	S	E	R	S	T	R	R
I	Y	G	I	U	C	A	N	D	I	D	A	T	E	T
L	Y	T	E	T	O	O	C	H	A	N	G	E	S	I
I	E	C	I	N	A	S	A	L	E	V	E	L	E	C
B	Q	C	I	S	D	T	E	S	T	S	E	A	R	I
I	U	E	N	L	R	A	N	R	S	A	U	B	A	P
S	A	T	V	A	O	E	O	E	D	E	A	O	C	A
N	L	A	O	O	T	P	V	E	S	L	M	R	H	T
O	I	T	T	C	P	S	R	I	L	E	E	B	T	O
P	T	S	E	U	S	S	I	O	D	F	R	T	L	R
S	Y	L	S	O	L	U	T	I	O	N	S	P	A	Y
E	E	S	E	Z	I	L	A	R	T	N	E	C	E	D
R	E	T	N	E	C	A	M	P	A	I	G	N	H	R

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Activism, Agenda, Assembly, Ballot, Campaign, Candidate, Center, Changes, Decentralize, Diversity, Ecology, Elect, Equality, Health care, House, Issues, Labor, Leaders, Level, Participatory, Peace, Policy, Reform, Representatives, Resistor, Resource, Responsibility, Senate, Solutions, Stance, State, Support, Votes

Yesterday's Answer: Kingston

We listened to your requests! TREASURY #6 is the first-ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 20 puzzles, with 75 of these large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 p&h ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume. $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Wonderword, Universal Uclick, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll-free 1-800-642-6480. Order online at upuzzles.com.

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pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIANSHIP FOR	FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 10-0089
PATRICK RIVERA GUEVARRA and MARTIN RIVERA GUEVARRA: Minor Children, By: PATRICIA VICTORIA GUEVARRA, Petitioner.	NOTICE OF HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on March 31, 2010, at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 205A, before Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Dated this 18th day of February, 2010.

/s/ Bernadita Sablan
Clerk of Court

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Saipan Tribune

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PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

SKU Saipan Kairos University

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, PUBLIC & PRIVATE SECTOR THAT **MR. CHI BUM AN** AND **MRS. HYO SUK SHIN** ARE NO LONGER THE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR, RESPECTIVELY OF **INTEGRATIVE CORPORATION dba Saipan Karios University**. ANY BUSINESS TRANSACTION ENTERED INTO BY **MR. AN** AND **MRS. SHIN** IN BEHALF OF INTEGRATIVE CORPORATION FROM FEBRUARY 05, 2010 TO PRESENT, WERE NOT AUTHORIZED AND WILL NOT BE HONORED BY THE NEW OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF THE COMPANY.

CHI BUM AN

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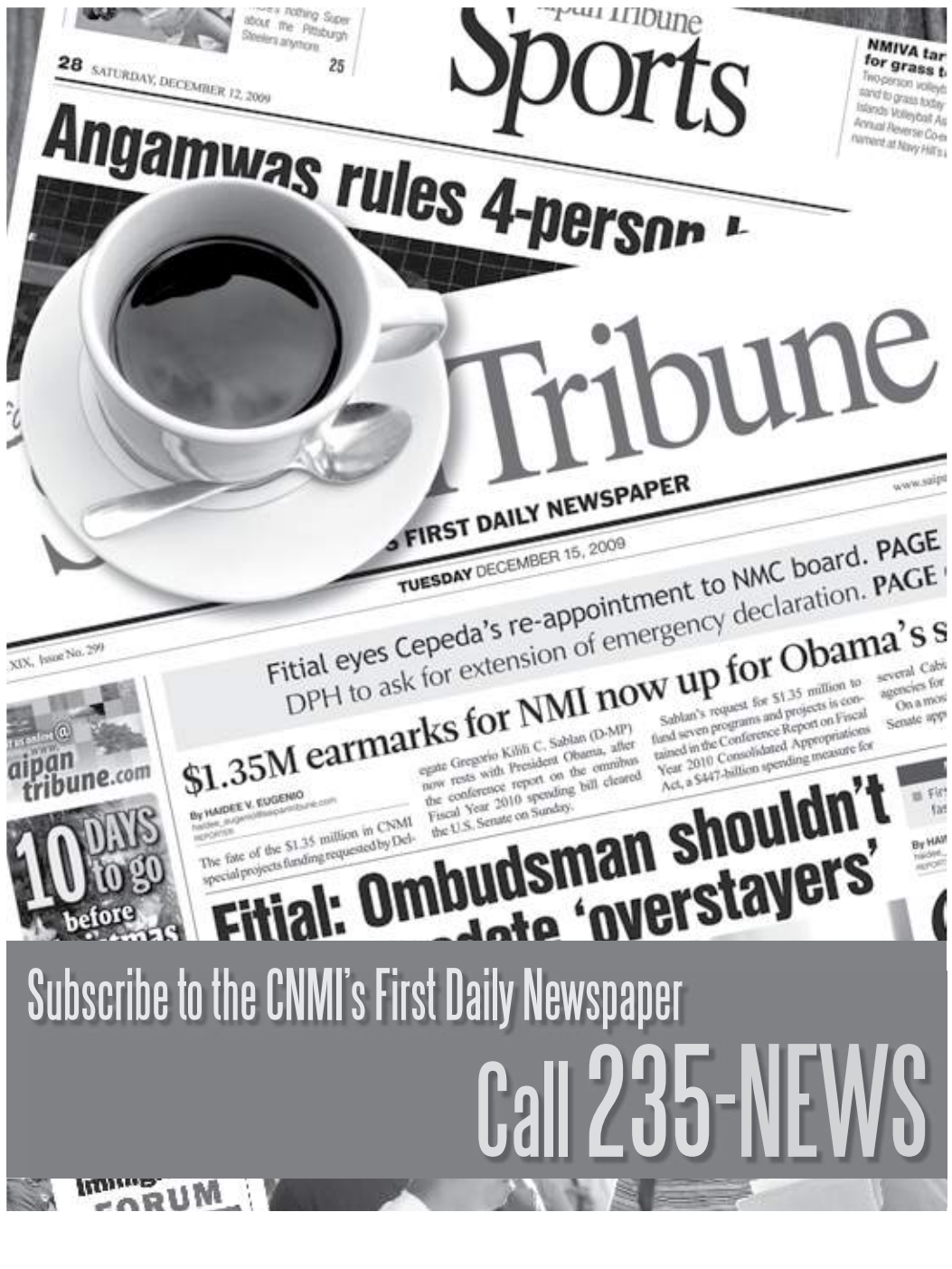
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Woods will return to golf at Masters on April 8

PALM HARBOR, Fla. (AP)—For Tiger Woods, this figures to be a Masters like no other. Woods said Tuesday he will end more than four months of seclusion and play at Augusta National in three weeks, shielded by the most secure environment in golf as he competes for the first time since a sex scandal shattered his image.

"The Masters is where I won my first major and I view this tournament with great respect," Woods said in a statement. "After a long and necessary time away from the game, I feel like I'm ready to start my season at Augusta."

The Masters begins April 8.

No other major championship attracts such a large television audience, and that's under normal circumstances.

Already the most popular figure in golf with his 82 worldwide victories and 14 majors—four of them at the Masters—Woods returns as a disgraced star who will be under the greatest scrutiny of his career.

"We're all looking forward to having him back. We want him playing," Jim Furyk said. "I'm sure we're also looking forward to everything being business as usual. And it's going to take awhile. We know that."

Woods last competed Nov. 15 when he won the Australian Masters in Melbourne. Twelve days later, he rammed his SUV over a fire hydrant and into a tree outside his Florida home, an accident that set off sordid tales of extramarital affairs. Woods announced Dec. 11 that he would take an indefinite break to try to save his marriage.

"The major championships have always been a special focus in my career and, as a professional, I think Augusta is where I need to be, even though it's been a while since I last played," Woods said.

AP
In this April 12, 2009, file photo, Tiger Woods looks over a putt during the final round of the Masters golf tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga.

"I have undergone almost two months of inpatient therapy and I am continuing my treatment," he said. "Although I'm returning to competition, I still have a lot of work to do in my personal life."

Augusta National chairman Billy Payne said the club supported Woods' decision to make his return at the Masters, adding that "we support and encourage his stated commitment to continue the significant work required to rebuild his personal and professional life."

PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem also said he was pleased to learn of Woods' return.

The Associated Press first reported last Thursday that Woods would not play until the Masters, despite other published stories that he would return this week at the Arnold Palmer Invitational in Orlando, Fla. There has been so much buzz that when Finchem held a teleconference Monday on an undisclosed topic, the call was loaded with media suspecting an announcement on Woods' return. Instead, it was to announce a new title sponsor.

Small wonder that CBS Sports president Sean McManus said last week of Woods' return to golf: "My only prediction is when he comes back, it will be, other than the Obama inauguration, one of if not the biggest media spectacle in recent memory."

ESPN will televise the first two rounds of the Masters, and CBS Sports has the weekend. The highest TV rating for the Masters in the cable era was a 14.1 on the Sunday in 1997 when Woods, then 21, became the tournament's youngest champion with a record 12-shot victory.

"Wow I've had a lot of calls today from friends who have decided to come to the Masters this year," British Open champion Stewart Cink said on Twitter.

"Obviously, the ratings will be off the chart," said PGA Tour player Heath Slocum. "It will be interesting to watch—not only the reaction from him, but from the fans, the media, the players. I would venture to say he might be nervous."

The Masters—"A tradition like no other" is a longtime CBS promo - has restrictions like no other major. Media credentials are limited even in normal circumstances, and the club has tight control over who gets in. Some fans with season badges risk losing them forever for violating rules, such as being caught with a cell phone or a camera. Among the rules: No running.

Most players expect Woods to be heckled, although not as much—if any—at the Masters.

"That's why Augusta makes such good sense," Furyk said. "There's less of that than anywhere else. Everyone is afraid to lose their ticket. The etiquette and behavior is far better than anywhere else because of the fear factor."

Still to be determined is the state of his game.

Woods left for a Mississippi clinic for therapy on Dec. 31—the day after his 34th birthday—and returned Feb. 11 to prepare for his first public appearance at the TPC Sawgrass when he apologized for his behavior and confessed to extramarital affairs. He took no questions.

He spent another week in Arizona for family therapy, returning Feb. 27 and heading to the practice range to get back into a routine. His coach, Hank Haney, was with him at Isleworth last week.

There had been reports he would play the Tavistock Cup exhibition next week in Orlando, followed by the Arnold Palmer Invitational at Bay Hill, where he is the defending champion and a six-time winner.

"When I finally got into a position to think about competitive golf again, it became apparent to me that the Masters would be the earliest I could play," Woods said.

Woods twice has gone to a major without having competed after a long layoff—nine weeks—and had mixed results. He missed the cut at Winged Foot for the 2006 U.S. Open after his father died, and he won the 2008 U.S. Open at Torrey Pines while playing on a shattered left knee that kept him out the rest of the year.

"It's obviously great for golf that he's back," three-time major champion Padraig Harrington said. "It shows the commitment he has to his family. If he came back earlier, that would give him a better chance at Augusta. He would have been putting golf first. Putting his family first by not warming up for Augusta, it's a good statement."

Woods has been the biggest draw at the Masters since that watershed victory in 1997. That likely won't compare to this year.

His world came crashing down Nov. 27 when he fled his house in the middle of the night, an incident still filled with questions that Woods might never answer: Where was he going? What caused him to hit the tree? What injuries sent him to the hospital? And how could the world's most famous athlete keep secret so many affairs?

Woods lost three corporate sponsors—Accenture, AT&T and Gatorade—and became the butt of jokes nationally, from TV talk shows to Disney stage productions.

This will be the first time Woods has missed Bay Hill as a professional, the only regular PGA Tour event he has played every year. Palmer told The Golf Channel that Woods called to apologize for not being there.

"He sounded good. He had some zip in his voice," Palmer said. "He knows what he wants to do with his life and the way he's going to handle it, and I guess we're going to give him that respect. I would think for Tiger it's going to be tough. It's going to be something that's going to take him a little time to get used to."

Palmer said Woods told him he didn't feel his game "was up to speed to start playing this early."

Ark-Pine Bluff beats Winthrop 61-44 in NCAA opener

DAYTON, Ohio (AP)—Smiling Arkansas-Pine Bluff players plopped into the black folding chairs at courtside and checked their cell phones for congratulatory messages before heading out the arena door to get on yet another bus.

Finally, the Golden Lions had found a road trip to their liking.

Allen Smith scored 14 points Tuesday night, including a pair of 3-pointers during the Golden Lions' second-half surge to a 61-44 victory over Winthrop in the NCAA tournament's opening game.

The Golden Lions (18-15) will play Duke, the No. 1 seed in the South Regional, on Friday in Jacksonville, Fla.—a place they somehow missed during a season-opening jaunt that nearly did them in.

"It seems like we play better on the road than we do at home because we're so used to being on the road," said center Lebaron Weathers said. "

Didn't feel that way at the start of the season.

The Golden Eagles spent the first two months playing some of the country's best teams on the road, going everywhere and getting nowhere. They dropped their first 11 games—all on the road—losing at schools such as Texas-El Paso, Michigan, Oklahoma State, Georgia Tech, Missouri, Kansas State and Oregon.

Players cranked up their iPods and let their music soothe them during 13-hour bus rides across the heartland in November and December, ones that bonded them for much better things in March.

"We think it brought them together," coach George Ivory said. "You've got to stay together on the road. You get to know each other better. You go through some bumps and bruises on the road, playing in some pretty tough places."

The basketball equivalent of boot camp hardened them for a Southwestern Athletic Conference season that would be much more kind. Their next destination is with history—a chance to pull off the unprecedented first-round upset of a No. 1 team by a 16 seed.

Ivory knows a little bit about that. He was a star at Mississippi Valley State, which kept up with No. 1 Duke in 1986 before falling 85-78.

"You see Duke a lot on TV," Ivory said. "You see them so much, it's kind of like you just know what they're going to do."

The fast exit was familiar for Winthrop (19-14), which has made the tournament nine times in the last 12 years but has only one victory in all those tries.

Winthrop got the type of game it wanted, but couldn't make a shot as another tournament slipped away. Charles Corbin scored 13 points for the Eagles, who shot 29 percent from the field and went 2 of 21 behind the 3-point arc.

"We picked a bad time to have a bad game," coach Randy Peele said. "We played really frustrated. I hadn't seen that from us for a while."

Neither team shoots particularly well—no player averages more than 10 points for either one. Instead, they win with tight defense and rebounding.

These mirror-image teams settled in to slog one out on the NCAA's big stage.

Midway through the first half, there were as many shots blocked as made. Bored fans started doing the wave. Arkansas-Pine Bluff's Tavaris Washington missed two dunk attempts. Both teams shot under 30 percent from the field in the first half, which ended with the Golden Lions up 24-23.

Ugly? Not to these two.

Corbin was the only shooter with any semblance of a touch, making his three attempts in the first half. His 3-pointer started a 13-2 run that gave Winthrop a 23-17 lead. The Golden Lions caught up by drawing fouls and making free throws.

Then, Smith changed everything with two uncontested shots.

Smith hit a pair of 3s—a rarity in this game—as Arkansas-Pine Bluff pushed its lead to 38-31. He held up his right hand in the "OK" sign—three fingers extended—after connecting from the left corner and the top of the key.

Things were anything but OK for Winthrop when the Golden Lions' Terrell Kennedy, a bulky front-line player, swished only his second 3-pointer of the season to beat the shot clock, helping Arkansas-Pine Bluff pull ahead 14. Winthrop would never get closer than nine the rest of the way, unable to make an open shot or get a turnover to set up a layup.

"That became frustrating for me personally," said Mantoris Robinson, the Big South's two-time defensive player of the year. "I felt if we got some stops, our offense would flow. But we didn't shut them down."

For the final touch, Smith got an open 3 from the left wing and swished it with 16.3 seconds left, then gave his "OK" sign one last time.

This road trip was definitely more than OK.

Cavs top Pistons, LeBron has triple-double

AUBURN HILLS, Michigan (AP)—LeBron James had 29 points, 12 rebounds and 12 assists in his fourth triple-double of the season, lifting the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 113-101 victory over the Detroit Pistons on Tuesday night.

Cleveland has won four in a row and lost only one of its last 11 games, improving to an NBA-best 53-15 win-loss record.

Richard Hamilton had 24 points and was one of six Pistons who scored in double figures.

Detroit has lost three straight games and eight of 10.

AP

Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James shoots over Detroit Pistons forward Tayshaun Prince in the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game Friday, March 5, 2010, in Cleveland.

Spurs 88, Heat 76

At Miami, Manu Ginobili scored 22 points, George Hill had 16 and surging San Antonio wasted most of a 25-point, third-quarter lead before beating Miami.

Richard Jefferson added 15 points and Tim Duncan had 12 points and 11 rebounds for the Spurs, who've won eight of their last nine and ensured they would end the night no worse than No. 7 in the Western Conference standings.

Dwyane Wade scored 28 points for Miami, which lost for the first time in its last seven home games. Jermaine O'Neal added 13 points and Udonis Haslem finished with 10 points and 12 rebounds for the Heat, who missed a chance to move past Charlotte for the No. 6 spot in the East race. Charlotte lost at Indiana.

Lakers 106, Kings 99

At Sacramento, Kobe Bryant scored 30 points and Pau Gasol added 28 points and 11 rebounds as the Los Angeles Lakers completed a sweep of their Northern California swing with a 106-99 victory over the Kings.

After committing 24 turnovers and barely holding on for a 124-121 victory at Golden State on Monday night, the Lakers were much sharper on the back end of their trip. They committed just two turnovers in the first half and 10 for the game, overpowering the Kings inside to win their fourth straight following a season-high, three-game losing streak.

Andrew Bynum added 21 points and 12 rebounds, and the Lakers finished with 60 points in the paint to remain four games ahead of Denver for the best record in the Western Conference.

Suns 152, Timberwolves 114

At Phoenix, Jason Richardson scored 27 points and Amare Stoudemire scored 25, then sat with the rest of the Phoenix starters while the Suns' reserves finished off a 152-114 rout of Minnesota in the highest-scoring game by an NBA team this season.

Lou Amundson matched his career high with 20 points as Phoenix sent the Timberwolves to their 10th straight loss and 16th in the last 17 games.

The Suns, with eight players in double figures, shot 56 percent and won their ninth in 12 games.

Pacers 99, Bobcats 94

At Indianapolis, Danny Granger scored 26 points to help Indiana deny Charlotte what would have been a franchise-record seventh consecutive victory.

Troy Murphy had 16 points and 13 rebounds, and Mike Dunleavy added 15 points for Indiana, which had lost 14 of its previous 17 games.

Former Pacer Stephen Graham scored a career-high 19 points and tied a career best with eight rebounds in place of All-Star forward Gerald Wallace, who missed his second straight with an injured left ankle. Stephen Jackson, another former Pacer, finished with 20 points, nine rebounds and six assists.

Hawks 108, Nets 84

At East Rutherford, Jamal Crawford hit a 30-footer at the buzzer to cap his game-breaking, 15-point second quarter as Atlanta ran away from woeful New Jersey.

Crawford, the NBA scoring leader among players who have not started a game, finished with 25 points in leading Atlanta to its third straight win and ninth in 12 games.

Marvin Williams added 15 points for the Hawks, who were playing without Joe Johnson for the first time this season. The All-Star guard has Achilles' tendinitis and did not accompany the team for its two-game road trip. Al Horford finished with 15 points and 11 rebounds.

Brook Lopez had 21 points for the Nets, who lost for the 60th time in 67 games. New Jersey needs to win three times in its last 15 games to avoid tying or breaking the NBA mark for fewest wins (9) in a season, set by the 1972-73 Philadelphia 76ers.

Grizzlies 104, Bulls 97

At Memphis, O.J. Mayo scored 24 points as Memphis sent undermanned Chicago to its eighth straight loss.

Mike Conley finished with 19 points and 10 assists, while Zach Randolph added 18 points and 12 rebounds. Rudy Gay had 12 points, and Marcus Williams and Hasheem Thabeet finished with 10 apiece.

Flip Murray scored 25 points for the Bulls, who were missing their top four scorers. Hakim Warrick came off the bench for 22, including 10 in the fourth as the Bulls made a run. Acie Law finished with a season-high 18 points, while Jannero Pargo had 12.

Nuggets 97, Wizards 87

At Denver, J.R. Smith scored 13 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter, helping Denver pull away to the Nuggets beat Washington.

Carmelo Anthony led Denver with 29 points and 12 rebounds. Nene added 16 points for Denver, which sent Washington to its ninth consecutive loss.

The game marked the return of Nuggets coach George Karl, who was back on the bench after missing four games over the past week for cancer treatments.

Andray Blatche led the Wizards with 23 points and Al Thornton had 16.

With wife at side, Beckham on feet after surgery

TURKU, Finland (AP)—With his celebrity wife at his side, David Beckham was back on his feet and walking on crutches Tuesday after surgery to repair the torn Achilles' tendon that will sideline him for about six months.

The 34-year-old former England captain "feels fine and is happy" as he recuperates from Monday's operation at a private clinic in Finland, his surgeon told The Associated Press. He added that Beckham would stay at the clinic until Wednesday.

"He does not have much pain and has started walking today and gradually done it more and more," Dr. Sakari Orava said.

Beckham was injured in the closing minutes of AC Milan's 1-0 win over Chievo Verona on Sunday. He was on his second loan to the Italian club from Major League Soccer's Los Angeles Galaxy.

"I'm feeling positive and now concentrating on getting back to full fitness over the coming months," Beckham said in a statement Tuesday.

Orava said Beckham's left Achilles' tendon was totally torn, ruling out his hopes of playing in his fourth World Cup. The tournament starts June 11 in South Africa.

"It is hard to tell, but in general I can say that after an Achilles' tendon tear, a total rupture, people usually are back in sports within half a year," Orava said.

AC Milan said Beckham would begin rehabilitation right away. He is not to put weight on his injured foot for two weeks and can undergo physical therapy in a pool after six weeks.

"The plan includes a complete recovery in six months, at the end of which he can play again," the club said in a statement.

Beckham's wife, Victoria Beckham, formerly known as "Posh Spice" of the Spice Girls, arrived by private jet Tuesday afternoon at a snowy Turku airport. She was taken to the clinic in a van with tinted windows.

Wearing a short black dress, sunglasses and no coat, she was met by dozens of screaming fans and photographers. A policewoman and a security officer escorted her out of the car, fending off the pushing crowd as she hurriedly made her way to the elevator.

David Beckham is under contract to AC Milan until June 30.

"So all the eventual contractual obligations will continue to apply," Milan organizing director Umberto Gandini told the AP. "After June 30, he will become a Los Angeles Galaxy player again. From the contractual point of view, absolutely nothing changes. The fact that he was injured doesn't change affect his contract."

Milan physicians followed Beckham to Finland and will also coordinate the first steps of rehabilitation.

"Until June 30 his rehab will be arranged in accordance with Milan and the Los Angeles Galaxy," Gandini said, adding that Milan could send one of its trainers to Los Angeles if Beckham chooses to return to California.

The injury shattered Beckham's hopes of becoming the first English player to appear in four World Cups and put his future on the national team in doubt. He will miss most of the MLS season.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown sent a get-well message to Beckham and praised his role as a soccer ambassador.

"He emphasized what a tremendous ambassador Mr. Beckham is for English soccer and wishes him well in his recovery, as I think the whole nation does," Brown spokesman Simon Lewis said.

Tomlinson says Favre didn't tip hand about plans

NEW YORK (AP)—Brett Favre kept his plans to himself, even as he helped try to recruit LaDainian Tomlinson to play for the Minnesota Vikings.

Tomlinson, who signed a two-year deal with the New York Jets on Sunday, said the quarterback gave no indication whether he'd return for a 20th season when they chatted about the Vikings last week.

"I would've thought that I might get a little bit of a kind of hint of what he was thinking, but no, he didn't," Tomlinson said on a conference call Tuesday. "He didn't give me a clue at all what he was thinking."

Favre played the 2008 season with the Jets after a messy split with the Green Bay Packers. He signed with the Vikings last offseason and helped Minnesota get within a game of the Super Bowl. The team is still waiting to hear from Favre about his intentions.

"I didn't ask him because I know as players, there's a lot of stuff that you deal with in the offseason and, in his case, about playing again," Tomlinson said. "So, I didn't want to get into it. He's owed that much respect to make his own decision."

Tomlinson, cut by San Diego last month, met with Vikings officials in Minnesota last Thursday about the prospect of joining the team, and also later heard from Favre. ESPN reported Tuesday, citing an anonymous source, that the communications between the players were by a series of text messages.

"As far as what Brett said, really, he didn't say much," Tomlinson said. "He just said both organizations are great. He told me to take my time, think about it and just make the best decision for my family and that was it."

Tomlinson said he chose the Jets because of his familiarity with the team's offensive scheme and the opportunity to play in New York. He also said the uncertainty surrounding Favre's future played no role in choosing the Jets over the Vikings.

"It really didn't because, honestly, in my mind, I don't know," he said. "He had a great year last year and you would think he would be coming back, but that had nothing to do with it. It had no factor in the decision."

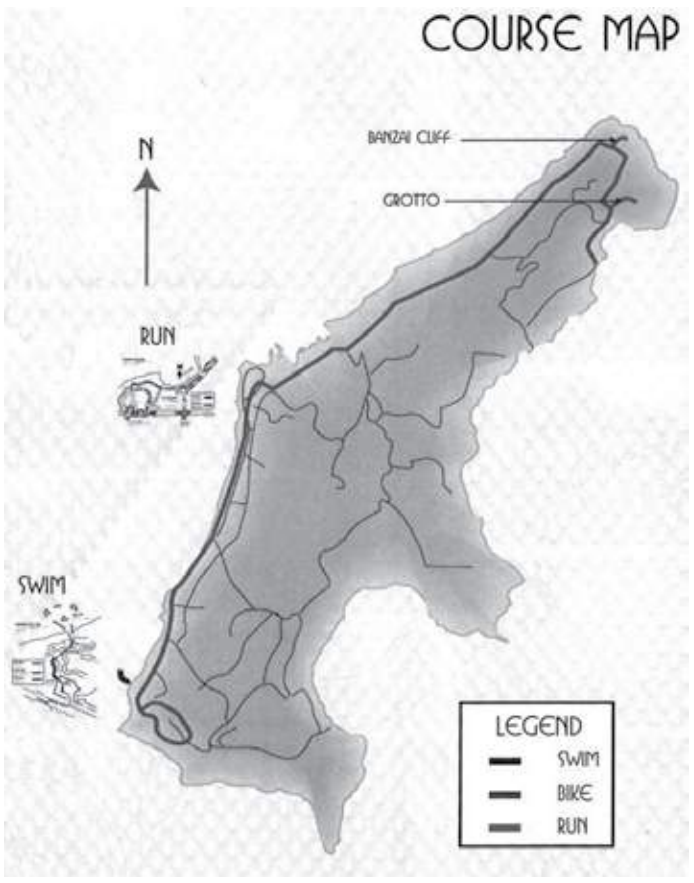
Tagaman caps March trio of races

This Saturday's 21st Tagaman Triathlon is the third and final signature race held in the Northern Marianas during March, drawing international attention and athletes to this tropical setting.

The Tagaman Triathlon was established by the Marianas Visitors Authority in 1988 and is the longest running race in the western Pacific. The event is named for Taga, a legendary chief of the ancient Chamorros.

His renowned feats of strength included lifting and placing enormous taga stones, limestone boulders which formed structures for the original Marianas Island inhabitants and which still stand today.

The event route is a fitting one named for a Chamorro king. The 2-kilometer swim begins at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan at 5:30am before transitioning to the 60-km biking section, which enables participants to tour and enjoy the entire island. The 15-km run section begins at Micro Beach, where runners will race along Beach Road to the bus stop at Oleai Beach Bar & Grill and back, as well as through American Memorial Park. There are cash prizes for the top six male and female finishers and trophies for age group winners.



Registration deadline to enter the Tagaman Triathlon is Friday, March 19. The registration fee for an individual is $150 and for a team it is $200.

The MVA asks drivers to be aware of the bike and run routes. Also, the following areas will be closed for part of the day or will require passes:

■ Koblerville Road. and Chalan Msgr. Martinez to Coral Ocean Point—closed from 5:30am to 7am.

■ Beach Road from PIC to Garapan Police/Fire Station—northbound lanes closed from 6am to 8am; one southbound lane closed from 7am to 11:30am.

■ Micro Beach Road (Micro Beach to AMP Tennis Court Intersection)—closed from 6am to 11:30am.

■ Chalan Pale Arnold from Micro Beach Road to La Fiesta, As Matuis turnoff—outside lanes closed to all vehicles from 6:30am to 10:30am; inside lanes (north and southbound) open to limited traffic.

■ Marpi Road (Chalan Pale Arnold to Chalan Kalabera, Bird Island Lookout, Grotto and Banzai Cliff Road—closed 6:30am to 9am.

"This has been an exciting month for athletes living in and visiting the Northern Mariana Islands," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "We've been very pleased with the successes of the Saipan Marathon and the XTERRA Saipan Championship. I know the Tagaman will be as rewarding. Because of MVA's part in Tagaman's inception, it is always a special event for us."

For more information, contact MVA's Frank Tudela at ftudela@mymarianas.com or 664-3200. ***(PR)***

JI HOON

From Page 28

invitation to be part of the pilot program. However, he has yet to decide on accepting the invitation, as he has a lot of things to do in preparation for his graduation in high school this year and his entrance to college.

"I am not completely sure if I will be joining the program as I will be going to college," Heo said.

The Marianas High School senior is considering four universities: Western Kentucky University, Farleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey, Hawaii Pacific University, and Bethany College.

The CNMI netter has until April 9 to decide if he will join Oceanien Pole, as the program will start in May and will run until September.

The program will cover an intensive training in Noumea for about a month, participation in four ITF events in June and July, training in either Noumea or Fiji for two weeks, participation in Pacific Oceania Junior Championships, another training in Noumea in August to September, and participation in Oceania Senior Championships in New Caledonia and two ITF events in New Zealand.

Heo is one of the five considered to be part of the program because of what OTF called an "encouraging" ranking in the Junior ITF. The Commonwealth bet is ranked No. 619 in the world. Others on the list are Papua New Guinea's Abigail Tere-Apisah (No. 131), and Marcia Tere-Apisah (No. 671), Samoa's Steffi Carruthers (No. 450), and New Caledonia's Anaeve Pail (No.1,600).

Besides the OTF invitation, Heo also qualified to join two tournaments in Brisbane, Australia next month.

"I qualified to join the Australian Junior ITF and Galipoli Junior IT, but I am not sure if I could make that trip, too, due to school commitments," Heo said.

MORE

From Page 28

Kingdom's Michael Hiscott to battle for the men's title. Other men's pro entered in the event are Korea's Yu Hun Park and Ko-On Cho, Japan's Takumi Obara Ben Distel, and Yasue Nakahara, the Philippines' Arland Macasieb, and Australia's Allan Collinson.

Bucher and Carey will be fighting for the women's title against United Kingdom's Emma Ruth Smith and Darelle Parker, American pro Shonny Vanlandingham, Japan's Chie Obara and Karen Miers, and Australia's Julia Lendwai.

MORE

From Page 28

who never hesitates to take people on, smiling all the while."

When asked what advice he would give to all the young players out there Tawanpiy said, "Try hard and believe in your dreams." ***(NMIFA)***

As of yesterday, 72 amateur triathletes from Japan, Korea, Saipan, and Guam have registered to compete in the various age group races and join the pros in the oldest triathlon event in the region.

In the relay division, Taga, Inc. had received registration forms and entrance fees from eight squads. They are the teams of Andrew Johnson and John Jenkins; Shin Kimura and Ben Babauta; Kiyoko Takahashi and Katsuo Kawamura; Edgardo De Guzman, Ronald Lanuza, and Cesar Danao; Grace Kimball, Kimiko Hasegawa, and Mamiko Berger; Andres Buitrago, Florence Antonio, and Jack Kabiriel; Kaisei Toda, Julio Vasquez, and Pedro Villaga; Nishiko Tamio and Fred Camacho; and Cooper Sharaudenbach, Derek Chambers, and Scott Hayden.

Taga, Inc. is expecting a few more entries both in the relay and individual races, as participants still have two days to register.

SHUTOUT

From Page 28

Adam Hardwicke, Moon Bin Hong, Kim Min Ki, Norman Camacho, and Mfijul Islam.

Young Guns, who are composed of youth players in the 18-and-under age group, also dropped their opening game against Inter Godfather's on March 7, 0-1.

Korean Senior 3, Tan Holdings 0

The second shutout win of the day belonged to Korean Senior, which defeated Tan Holdings FC, 3-0.

Gil Chong Ko tallied two goals for Korea Senior, while Kim Sung In made one.

It was Korean Senior and Tan Holdings' debuts in the league.

Matansa 6, Korean Junior 0

Matansa Football Club completed the day of shutout victories when it clobbered Korean Junior, 6-0.

T.J. Gurung found the back of the net twice and Matansa drew one goal apiece from four other players to hand Korean Junior its second straight loss.

Korean Junior debuted against Wild Bill's on March 7 and bowed, 0-5.

Wild Bill's and Inter Godfather's drew byes in the second week of the league.

In its debut, Wild Bill's got two goals each from Jeeraphong Thoensaket and Jason Schroeder and one from Rob Epley.

Inter Godfather's lone goal in its first game of the season against Young Guns came from Arkie Reusora.

This year's men's league will have a double-elimination format in the regular season with the event to last until July. Playoff format has yet to be decided.

On Sunday, Week 3 pairings will have Young Guns dueling Tan Holdings in the first game at 12pm, Wild Bill's battling Godfathers in the second match at 2pm, and Korean Junior and Korean Senior squaring off in the third game at 4pm.

March tournament scheduled Sunday

The Fil-Taga Golf Association will hold its March Ace of the Month Tournament this Sunday, March 21, at the Marianas Country Club.

According to tournament director Ted Malaran, check-in time for the weekend event is 11am with tee time set 30 minutes later at 11:30am at the Marpi golf venue.

The winner of the March Ace will join January winner Dandi Brebanario and February winner Joseph Fernandez as qualifiers for the season-ending Fil-Taga Club Championship. Established in 1993, Fil-Taga's tournaments operate under a computer-controlled handicap system that creates parity among players in the A and B Flights.

A Fil-Taga Ace of the Month champion is crowned monthly. Regular tournaments are scheduled once a month, normally every third Sunday. Green fees are in the $35 to $40 price range for most tournaments. ***(Fil-Taga)***

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	42	24	.636	—
Toronto	32	33	.492	9 1/2
New York	24	43	.358	18 1/2
Philadelphia	23	44	.343	19 1/2
New Jersey	7	60	.104	35 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	47	21	.691	—
Atlanta	43	23	.652	3
Charlotte	34	32	.515	12
Miami	35	33	.515	12
Washington	21	45	.318	25

Central Division

x-Cleveland	53	15	.779	—
Milwaukee	36	29	.554	15 1/2
Chicago	31	35	.470	21
Detroit	23	45	.338	30
Indiana	22	45	.328	30 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	45	22	.672	—
San Antonio	40	25	.615	4
Memphis	36	32	.529	9 1/2
Houston	34	31	.523	10
New Orleans	33	35	.485	12 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	46	22	.676	—
Utah	43	24	.642	2 1/2
Oklahoma City	41	24	.631	3 1/2
Portland	41	28	.594	5 1/2
Minnesota	14	54	.206	32

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	50	18	.735	—
Phoenix	42	26	.618	8
L.A. Clippers	25	43	.368	25
Sacramento	23	45	.338	27
Golden State	18	48	.273	31

x-clinched playoff spot

Yesterday's Games

Indiana 99, Charlotte 94
Cleveland 113, Detroit 101
Atlanta 108, New Jersey 84
San Antonio 88, Miami 76
Memphis 104, Chicago 97
Denver 97, Washington 87
L.A. Lakers 106, Sacramento 99
Phoenix 152, Minnesota 114

NBA LEADERS

Scoring

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
James, CLE	66	667	519	1972	29.9
Durant, OKC	65	632	572	1934	29.8
Anthony, DEN	55	554	430	1586	28.8
Bryant, LAL	63	637	390	1746	27.7
Wade, MIA	64	597	442	1699	26.5
Ellis, GOL	55	544	250	1396	25.4
Nowitzki, DAL	66	588	442	1650	25.0
Bosh, TOR	58	499	394	1400	24.1
Stoudemire, PHX	68	570	387	1528	22.5
Roy, POR	54	421	296	1205	22.3
Johnson, ATL	65	548	192	1396	21.5
Jackson, CHA	66	495	281	1374	20.8
Randolph, MEM	67	546	283	1386	20.7
Rose, CHI	64	548	201	1303	20.4
Evans, SAC	63	469	311	1281	20.3
Maggette, GOL	56	370	379	1130	20.2
Lee, NYK	67	564	210	1338	20.0
Brooks, HOU	65	466	204	1298	20.0
Billups, DEN	59	334	373	1174	19.9
Gay, MEM	66	501	248	1306	19.8

FG Percentage

	FG	FGA	PCT
Howard, ORL	429	702	.611
Perkins, BOS	273	449	.608
Hilario, DEN	359	605	.593
Gasol, MEM	372	638	.583
Bynum, LAL	388	683	.568
O'Neal, CLE	262	463	.566
Horford, ATL	379	682	.556
Lee, NYK	564	1019	.553
Boozer, UTA	499	905	.551
Millsap, UTA	312	566	.551

Rebounds

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Howard, ORL	68	238	661	899	13.2
Randolph, MEM	67	277	514	791	11.8
Lee, NYK	67	181	606	787	11.7
Camby, POR	62	206	503	709	11.4
Boozer, UTA	64	145	574	719	11.2
Bosh, TOR	58	170	477	647	11.2
Bogut, MIL	59	182	434	616	10.4
Duncan, SAN	62	192	455	647	10.4
Wallace, CHA	62	127	520	647	10.4
Haywood, DAL	62	242	376	618	10.0

Assists

	G	AST	AVG
Nash, PHX	67	750	11.2
Paul, NOR	38	424	11.2
Williams, UTA	61	630	10.3
Rondo, BOS	65	630	9.7
Kidd, DAL	65	607	9.3
James, CLE	66	566	8.6
Davis, LAC	66	527	8.0
Westbrook, OKC	65	518	8.0
Harris, NJN	50	335	6.7
Wade, MIA	64	417	6.5

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

NMIFA MEN'S LEAGUE

Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
1 MP United FC	2	2	0	0	10	0	+6	6
Wild Bills	1	1	0	0	5	0	+5	3
Inter Godfather	1	1	0	0	1	0	+1	3
Korean Senior	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	3
Matansa FC	2	1	0	1	3	4	-1	3
Tan Holdings FC	1	0	0	1	0	3	- 3	0
Korean Junior	2	0	0	2	0	8	-8	0
Young Guns	2	0	0	2	0	9	-10	0

2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship Banquet

PHOTOS by ROSELYN B. MONROYO

XTERRA Sport relay champions, from left, Ronald Lanuza, Byron Dela Cruz, and Glenn Policare pose with second placer Celerino Calayag, and third placers Jeff Taylor and Ben Babauta.

The Top 3 placers in the men's 50 to 54 XTERRA Championship course, from left, Toshiaki Watanabe, Makoto Katayama, and Manny Sitchon.

DFS Saipan's Mary Aldan-Pierce, left, shares a laugh with the Top 5 placers in the men's pro division.

PTI's Brad Ruszala, left, poses with 50 to 54 age group winners in XTERRA Sport, Peter Bonser, Florence Antonio, and Daniel Calvo, after awarding them medals.

The age group winners in the women's division of XTERRA Sport.

The Top 3 placers in the men's 40 to 44 age group XTERRA Sport, from left, James Abuy, Jay Diyco, and Jason Tarkong pose with race director Bill Sakovich during the awards ceremony for the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship last Saturday at the Pacific Islands Club.

The Top 5 placers in the women's pro division wear mwar during the awards presentation.

Mixed relay XTERRA Sport winner Tom Linden, center, and Irma Halaby receive their medals from race director Bill Sakovich, left. The winning team also had Janet King as a member.

The Top 3 placers in the men's 20 to 24 XTERRA Championship course, from left, Connery Nichols, Andres Buitrago, and Jake Van Dam.

The mixed relay Top 2 placers in XTERRA Championship are all smiles after receiving their medals.

Woods will return to golf at Masters on April 8

24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

84 days to go before SOUTH AFRICA 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP

Ji Hoon invited to join Oceanien Pole

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior netter Ji Hoon Heo has received an invitation to join a pilot summer program that will train top players in the region and have them compete in various tournaments for months.

Dubbed as Oceanien Pole, the program is a four-month junior player development plan consisting of training in New Caledonia with a small elite junior squad, local competition, and participation in eight international tournaments.

"It is felt that having a small group of the best young players in the region together for a substantial period of the year will enable them to better develop their talent through intensive personalized coaching, physical training and competition. OTF sees this program as an extension to the excellent development program at the ITF Regional Training Centre in Lautoka, providing competition opportunities for players from the RTC and nations/territories in Oceania by combining resources," Oceania Tennis Federation executive officer Patrick O'Rourke wrote in his letter of invitation to Heo through CNMI coach Jeff Race.

According to the invitation, the New Caledonia government, Ligue Caledonienne de Tennis, OTF, and the International Tennis Federation are supporting the program.

"OTF has much pleasure in extending an invitation to Ji Hoon Heo to be part of this program for 2010," O'Rourke said.

Heo said he is honored to receive an

See JI HOON on Page 26

CNMI netter Ji Hoon Heo, seen here competing in a local tournament, has been invited to join a tennis program called Oceanien Pole.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

More than 100 to take on Tagaman

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Nineteen pros lead more than 100 participants to this Saturday's 2010 Tagaman Triathlon.

The list includes the United Kingdom's Sam Gardner and Switzerland's Renata Bucher, who after conquering last weekend's XTERRA Saipan, an off-road event, stayed for one more week to compete in the longer road race.

This Saturday's Tagaman will cover a two-kilometer swim in the waters off Pacific Islands Club Saipan, a 60-km bike race from the southern to the northern part of the island, and a 15-km run along the scenic Beach Road.

"I am hoping to win Tagaman this time. It's a bit easier as there will be no treacherous trails. However, you've got to be more prepared for this race, as this is longer. One has to race in a hot weather longer," Gardner said in an interview after XTERRA Saipan last Saturday.

Gardner finished only second to Japanese road racer Masauki Matsumaru last year with the former timing in at 3:02:03 against the latter's 2:59:41. Australia's Andrew Noble completed the Top 3 with his time of 3:04:53.

Bucher was seventh overall in last year's Tagaman, but was the first female finisher, timing in at 3:28:18. The Swiss defeated local favorite Mieko Carey, who was ninth overall and second in the women's division after submitting 3:32:58.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Saipan's Lewie Tenorio leads a group of swimmers heading back to the waters off Micro Beach for the second lap of the swim leg in the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championships last Saturday.

RELATED NEWS
Tagaman caps March trio of races
PAGE 26

Matsumaru will miss this year's Tagaman, leaving Gardner, Canada's Mike Vine, Australia's Jason Chalker, and United

See MORE on Page 26

Tawanpiy gets kick out of soccer

SPORTS TLIGHT

Timothy Tawanpiy started playing soccer five years ago at age 10. Though he still plays basketball, baseball, and volleyball, soccer remains his favorite sport. If he doesn't have an official practice or game, Tawanpiy will usually find an hour during the day to kick the ball around either at the local basketball court or at the beach.

Notice that Tawanpiy didn't say he plays at the local park or at the school field, in fact he cited field conditions as well as rough play as the things he likes least about the sport.

The best thing about playing soccer, Tawanpiy said is making new friends. "To win at soccer, you can't do it alone; you need to be part of a team."

Tawanpiy's dream is to play soccer forever, which is a distinct possibility if you look at the average ages of players in the CNMI's men's league or even on the National Team. Tawanpiy hopes to one day also play for the CNMI National Team and in college.

Name	Timothy Tawanpiy
Team	Paire FC, U18
Age	15
Favorite pro player	Christiano Ronaldo
Favorite CNMI player	Jason Schroeder

Steve McKagan, one of Tawanpiy's coaches said, "Tim is a fearless player

See TAWANPIY on Page 26

Shutout wins in NMIFA men's league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

MP United notched back-to-back shutout wins in the 2010 NMIFA Men's Invitational Football League after crushing Young Guns, 8-0, on Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

CNMI National team member Joe Miller knocked down five goals to lift MP United to a 2-0 record and an early lead in the eight-team league. During the opening of the league on March 7, Miller and company also had a shutout win, blanking Matansa Football Club, 4-0.

In those two victories, besides Miller, MP United also drew goals from Nick Swaim, Tiger Lee, Rokibul Malitha and Dae Min Jeon. Other members of MP United are Peter Bonser, Yim Jae Hyuck, Richard Brostrom, Yukiomi Adachi, Kirk Schuler, Peter Presley,

See SHUTOUT on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
A Matansa Football Club player, right, kicks the ball while a Korean Junior defender tries to sneak in during their game in the NMIFA men's league last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.